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THE *Asbury Seminarian* ★ ★

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Vol. III

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*Spring* ♦ *1948*

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TRAINING A SPIRIT-FILLED MINISTRY

# THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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# The President's Letter

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS

The Fourth Annual Ministers' Conference, featuring the Lizzie H. Glide lectures, was held during the closing weeks of the winter quarter, February 24-26. Bishop Fred P. Corson delivered five lectures on the theme, "The Preacher's Parable." Bishop L. R. Marston delivered five lectures on the theme, "The Wesleyan Witness in This Age."

Dr. Ralph Earle, Professor of Biblical Literature, Nazarene Theological Seminary, lectured on, "Recent Religious Literature" and taught a class on "Christian Perfection in the Light of Modern Religious Trends." Dr. Hildreth M. Cross, Professor of Psychology at Asbury College, taught a class on "Basic Principles of Psychology Useful to the Pastor." Dr. W. W. Holland, Professor of Religion and Social Studies in Asbury College, taught a class on "The Modern Pastor and Evangelism." Dr. W. C. Mavis, Dean of John Wesley Seminary Foundation and Professor of Pastoral Counseling at Asbury Theological Seminary, taught a class on "The New Testament Pattern of the Christian Ministry."

Dr. Alexander Reid of the Belgian Congo gave the missionary address. Mr. Perry Hayden, an outstanding Christian layman of Tecumseh, Michigan, showed his remarkable motion picture in color on "God Is My Landlord." He also conducted a round-table hour on the same theme. The Minister's Conference drew an attendance from a distance, from ten states and thirteen denominations.

The official opening of the Henry Clay Morrison Memorial Administration Building was held during the conference with Dr. John Paul delivering the message. The opening of this new building marks the passing of another important milepost in the progress of the seminary. A short service was held in the main lobby of the building, preceding Dr. Paul's address at the Methodist Church. Splendid paintings of both Dr. and Mrs. Morrison hang in the main lobby. The spiritual presence of both of these great benefactors of the seminary was distinctly felt by those present. Dr. Morrison's favorite song, "On Jordan's Stormy Banks," was sung with deep feeling. The singing seemed to be an expression of appreciation for his remarkable life of devotion and consecration to the cause of Christ.

Dr. John Paul's address, following the service in the main lobby of the new building, was a remarkable combination of philosophy, humor and penetrating insight into the life and times of Dr. H. C. Morrison. Dr. Paul was intimately associated with Dr. Morrison in his work for more than forty years.

The opening convocation of the John Wesley Seminary Foundation of the Free Methodist Church was held on February the 23rd and 24th, preceding the opening of the Ministers' Conference. The leaders and the speakers in connection with this program included Bishop M. D. Ormston, Bishop J. P. Taylor, Bishop L. R. Marston, Dean W. C. Mavis, Dr. Roy S. Nicholson, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Dr. R. L. Decker, President, National Association of Evangelicals, Dean W. D. Turkington, Dr. Don Morris, Rev. Byron Lamson, Rev. R. B. Campbell, Rev. Ernest Keasling, President Z. T. Johnson, and Presi-

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## *Our Contributors*

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## Editorial--

# Social Ethics and its Orthodoxy

The acceleration of interest in the science of society which marked the second half of the nineteenth century would scarcely fail to have its repercussions in theological education. In addition to a growing social interest in the conventional theological disciplines, there appeared new departments and professorships in Social Ethics. Today Social Ethics has a firm place among the disciplines for the training of the minister. It is, therefore, of great concern to the Church that the studies undertaken in this division shall be of such a nature as to contribute positively to the preparation of the candidate.

In connection with the development of this branch of theological training, it is interesting to note that it has already developed an orthodoxy of its own. This is the more remarkable in the light of two facts: first, the relative newness of the discipline of Social Ethics; and second, the precarious state of contemporary social and economic conditions. A canvass of the writings of the outstanding professors of Social Ethics reveals that the new division of socio-theological studies is fairly characterized as of the political and social left. To be orthodox in this field demands that the writer or instructor be opposed to the present capitalistic order particularly as it exists in the United States.

This editorial proposes to examine several of the premises which the current Social Ethics discipline assumes, with a view to determining whether or not they are as sound as their proponents think them to be. Some of them seem, on the surface at least, to be highly debatable, and possibly open to the charge of being naïve.

Basic to the orthodoxy of modern Social Ethics is the view that our present economic system is inescapably geared to an unworkable nationalism, which is in turn the cause of wars. At the same time, our brethren of the left inveigh against cartel

agreements which are obviously international in character, and which frequently produce such anomalous results in wars between states. It is assumed, further, that national rivalries are *purely* economic things. Those who thus declare seem to this writer to oversimplify the problem. While economic considerations are frequently to blame in large part for wars, it is hardly safe to neglect the other factors involved, such as love of location, patriotic sensitiveness, cultural inferiority complexes, and the like. In any case, history hardly clears those nations in which the political order overshadows the economic order of guilt for precipitating wars.

The second assumption which seems to demand attention is, that those nations which have adopted strong governmental controls over economic processes have done so purely as a result of the rational conclusions of their enlightened citizens that a more free economy is wrong. Now, there are some nations, such as the Scandinavian countries, which have made voluntary moves in the direction of state socialism. None will deny, however, that these peoples, numerically and geographically small and surrounded by powerful states whose economies they fear, have been influenced by certain practical considerations which would hardly have issued from a simple belief in the fundamental unsoundness of capitalism.

More significant still is the blunt fact that several nations now experimenting with state socialism, notably Great Britain, are doing so because their physical resources have been depleted beyond the degree from which recovery was possible from private enterprise. In other words, only the State is now an instrument sufficiently powerful to undertake the gigantic problem of reconstruction. One gets the feeling that these states have adopted Socialism as a compromise meas-

ure, to secure them, if possible, against total chaos and the Communism which inevitably breeds in economic ferment. Few indeed are the instances of major powers which have moved from free enterprise to state control over the economic system under any other circumstances except those of disaster.

A third assumption is, that these nations which are now moving toward the left have at long last embarked upon a course which will end the absurd and destructive fluctuations to which the capitalist economy is subject. It is true that the Soviet Union has put an end to some economic problems: the machinery for this purpose operated recently in the shuffle of currency there. One is tempted to wonder how many professors of Social Ethics would wish to have the endowments upon which their salaries depend subject to such currency manipulations as occurred this past fall in the Soviet Union. And to declare at this stage any degree of success for Great Britain in this respect requires either vast predictive power or a blind faith in a given type of economic arrangement. Possibly Britain will in time, with the aid of capital furnished under the Marshall Plan, restore some semblance of economic stability.

We are asked, however, to believe that the United States is decades behind the times in continuing with her relatively free economy, while the other parts of the world move boldly ahead toward rational societies in which depressions remain only in the memories of the aged. It is true, of course, that our economic system has its evil spots; certainly no one of understanding would pretend that it is as efficient as it might be. At the same time, common sense demands some reserve in the expression of optimism with respect to the success of newer movements.

A fourth presupposition which seems debatable is, that the strong state need not be an arbitrary state. We are assured that fear of the strong state grows out of a basic mistrust of human nature—a lack of confidence in the essential goodness of man. Against this, we are bidden to believe that totalitarianism is but an accidental per-

version of statecraft, due to (temporary) power distortions growing out of the loss of individuality in a previous capitalistic society.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the strong state is bad only as a result of a hold-over from the capitalistic order. If this be true, it follows as a matter of course that history can teach us nothing about the ultimate destiny of the strong state.

Social theologians of the orthodox school insist that we are setting up a false antithesis when we set free-enterprise against collectivism. They bid us cease to emphasize the element of power in the corporate life, and to place additional confidence in the essential altruism in human nature which underlies the social tendencies in mankind. An appeal to history is far from reassuring at this point: few indeed have been the statesmen who were not corrupted by power to the abuse of power. The grim record of the past bears witness to the persistence of the egoistic impulse, and of the tendency of strength to beget lust for power. Moreover, the strong and efficient state demands long tenure of office for its leadership. It is far from reassuring to study the effects of perpetuity in office upon state officials. Seldom have strong states administered by 'career' men exerted power in the direction of the freedom of the common man.

It is a commonplace to say that coercion plays a large part in human corporate life. The genius of democracy is, that its coercions are dispersed: in addition to legal coercion there are hidden coercions from non-state sources. A case might conceivably be made for the view that the best safeguard against state tyranny is to be found in a system of dispersed coercions, with their inevitable checks upon each other.

It goes without saying that there is no simple *either . . . or* between a completely free economy and an economy administered by the strong state. The United States of America possesses government 'services', such as the Post Office, the I. C. C., etc.

<sup>1</sup> Walter G. Muelder, "Concerning Power in the State" in *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. V, Spring, 1947, p. 3.

Moreover, it has made an experiment in state-industry in T. V. A. Possibly some enterprises are too large for private capital and must be undertaken, if at all, by governmental agencies. To date, however, these have been kept in check by parallel business structures, privately owned.

A fifth assumption to which attention needs to be drawn is that state capitalism will avoid the abuses to which private capitalism is subject. It goes without saying that economic liberals have, in general, seen that the structure of our world demands vast pools of economic power—that no spindle-and-loom economy can be expected to survive. This is a tacit admission that it is not capitalism which is wrong, but capitalism in non-public hands. One is tempted to inquire what alchemy will render this instrument evil on one hand and good on the other. The ideal answer would speak of the state as acting in the 'public good' and of private capitalism as acting solely in the interest of the few. This rests again upon the assumption that the strong state is more ethical than a private economy balanced by a state which acts as an umpire rather than a board of directors.

It seems to the writer that the whole case of the political left depends upon the emergence, under conditions of the strong state, of administrators of such idealism and altruism as will cause them to subordinate private to public interest. Some will doubtless inquire concerning the probability of the production of such a type of altruism, and concerning what magic in the planned economy will bring forth such a rare product. The modern social anthropologist may reply, that a right view of the state as a moral reality will clarify the problem, and that there is need for a deeper realization of the teleological working of the *social real* in its members—when they are freed from the inhibiting distortions which have hitherto worked through the economy of private capital.

A sixth assumption is expressed in terms of the bearing of the science of nuclear fission upon statecraft. Inasmuch as the discovery of methods for the release of atomic energy opens a source of power

too great to be entrusted to private hands, it must be in the trusteeship of the state. This is by no means a frivolous argument. While it is too early to assess the overall significance of atomic power for the civilization of the decades to come, it seems within the range of the possible that governments will perforce be engaged in the business of exploiting and allocating atomic energy—provided they can handle their differences with other governments through diplomatic channels. At the same time, we are well advised to avoid the customary hysteria with respect to this subject, and to remember that other factors may operate to alter the entire picture before peacetime exploitation of atomic fission is feasible.

A seventh assumption is that public ownership of key industries is compatible with private ownership of a significant number of others. Those who assert this take for granted that the state will be content to be just so strong and no stronger, and that it will need to regulate only certain categories of business—say natural resources, or public utilities. There is something to be said, however, for the view that competitive factors will compel nothing less than all-out socialism. Private business can hardly compete with public business, so long as deficits in the latter can be cared for out of the public treasury. The writer is aware of the complicated nature of the problem of economic risks, and their relation to profit margin.<sup>3</sup> Doubtless this factor has been greatly overworked as a justification of profit as a factor in the economy of a people. At the same time, it seems inescapable that state capitalism must swallow more and more of the economy of the people in whose name it works.

The eighth and last assumption to which attention is turned is that private capitalism represents a severance of economics from Christian morality, and that state capitalism will reunite the two. This argument is frequently based upon a wholesale denunciation of the 'profit motive'. Now, few will doubt that our economic life is far

<sup>3</sup> Harry F. Ward, *Our Economic Morality*, pp. 146ff.



from an adequate expression of the ethic of the Gospel, and that the profit motive is capable of abuses. What is debatable is, whether private capitalism is *per se* anti-christian while collectivism is essentially Christian. May it not be that our economic life, along with many other phases, has never been christianized? It is far from assured that a change in the holder will effect *simpliciter* an alteration in the ethics of the system.

There have never been wanting persons to contend that *their* system reflected Jesus' ideals: the dialectical theologians have seen the absurdity of this, and have rightly protested the tendency to 'domesticate Christ'. So far as the clear teaching of the Gospels is concerned, Jesus set forth no economic system, but only laid down certain principles. He insisted that the abundance of a man's life does not consist in the things which he possesses. This maxim, taken seriously, would certainly have a profound effect upon the business practices of men.

It seems to this writer that more attention is due to certain of our Lord's teachings than has been given them, notably the parables dealing with stewardship. The Parable of the Talents, for instance, seems to imply nothing if not that there are differences in endowments, and that diligence is demanded and rewarded. Probably some will argue that we unduly restrict the significance of this parable to apply it to matters of an economic nature. Yet in its most direct sense it deals with endowments and returns, and reveals attitudes toward such matters. The judgment of the writer is, that if we seek a justification for the abolition of the profit motive in the New Testament, we must ground it elsewhere than in this parable. Those who take seriously the words of our Lord in this matter will hardly accept at face value the categorical denunciations of the profit motive which have become conventional to liberal social anthropologists. To question some of the applications of the profit principle is certainly legitimate. To treat it as social enemy number one is, however, naive.

Othodox social ethics has for its central

assertion the claim that the state must be strong, and that the political power must take precedence over the economic order.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the ultimate authority must be political in character. Subordinate concentrations of power can be permitted only if they be "ethical"—that is, if they be cultural or fraternal, but *not* economic. (This assumes, rather naively, that the economic order is *per se* unethical or at least non-ethical.) How the strong state proposes to build in the mind of the people at the grass-roots an idealism which such a plan requires has not been explained. More important still, of what value would dispersed non-economic organizations be if they were dependent for their bread and butter upon the political power? Possibly they would serve a useful purpose as sounding-boards for the political order.

Against the doctrine of the so-called strong state, we would urge the following objections. First, we must reject the state realism for which Plato is famous: the view of the state as an entity which is *per se* ethical. Against this we must affirm our belief in the intrinsically dangerous character of the state in which the political order is independent of, and supreme over, the economic order, and in which it is unchecked by strong, if disguised, forms of counter-coercion. This is not a demand for weak or inefficient government, but for a government in which the political sovereignty is held in check by the delicate balance of the other forces in human life.

The state is thus viewed as a framework within which the common life must be lived. This does not minimize the task of the state to secure the common good. It does, however, vigorously oppose the omni-responsible state, with its paternalistic 'cradle-to-grave' guarantees. The demand for such a state represents the 'failure of nerve' of democracy, and the willingness to sacrifice liberty for security. We must remember that a democratic society involves hazards for the social units; we believe that many of such hazards can be removed only at the price of the loss of the basic

<sup>1</sup> Muelder, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

liberties which we cherish.

Against the charge that the fear of the strong state grows out of misanthropy, we urge that our insistence upon a state in which the political power is counter-checked by economic and social power-dispersions is based upon a wholesome realism with respect to human nature. At this point, we affirm our belief that the political left is operating upon an assumption of the theological left which is naïve—namely, that of the fundamental goodness of man. At this point liberals will do well to heed the warning bell of the crisis theologians as they insist that sin has penetrated the very core of human nature—an insight which is by no means new to historic Christianity. Derived from this ingrained sinfulness are the impulses of will-to-power and will-to-acquire which survive the pious counsels of liberal statecraft, and which have historically left no middle ground between the state of dispersed controls and the totalitarian state.

It is difficult to avoid the observation, also, that the tendency of the orthodox school of social ethics to espouse the cause of the political left grows out of a 'band-wagon' mentality—a desire to ride the crest of the wave. Possibly the latent reasoning is as follows: the trend is toward the left, therefore let us seek to harness the trend. This may be good expediency: it is hardly good Christianity. At this point let it be said that we hold no form of political and economic system to be essential to the proclamation of the Christian message. Christianity was born in an era of dictatorship, and has survived the rise and fall of tyrants. Our concern here is for the form of statecraft which seems most compatible with the Christian message.

Again, leftist social ethics has a blind spot for the ability of the capitalistic order to correct its own economic abuses. One gets the impression that its proponents are living in the days of Ida M. Tarbell, while

capitalism has moved far ahead in humanizing itself. It is true that there is yet much land to be possessed; there is no reason that in a flexible democracy, such abuses as can be eliminated should not be progressively left behind. To say the least, it scarcely makes sense to set for purposes of comparison the worst features of capitalism in practice against the paper ideal of the socialist state.

Of the objections which we have raised to the strong state proposed by orthodox social ethics, the sum is this: such a state as this demands such a subordination of all other forms of power to the political power that there is no stopping-place short of the regimented state. The verdict of history is that such statecraft tends to inbreed itself, and to lead to tyranny. There is no historic precedent for the so-called ethical state demanded by the 'progressive' left. And to blame the development of totalitarianism upon the prior influence of the capitalistic order, and to brand fear of the state as misanthropy, is in our judgment to employ weasel words.

Finally, we are among those who, while deploring the lack of equity and efficiency under current democracy, must affirm our preference for free institutions, maintained through the balance of private against public power—even though these freedoms be secured at the price of some inefficiency and duplication of effort. It is far from certain that these abuses can be eliminated in the leftist state. We believe, further, that there is precedent which warrants the belief that a democratic society, with private capitalism moderately regulated by law, affords a framework within which economic and social abuses can be progressively eliminated. We believe that such a society accords best with a realistic view of human nature, and that it will in the long run afford the best set of factors within which human freedom can be maintained.

—H. B. K.

# Our Wesleyan Heritage After Two Centuries

PAUL STROMBERG REES

## I

### Where Are the Doctrinal Issues?

One of the finest and, from the religious point of view, one of the most appropriate of the many statues in our National Capitol is the equestrian figure of Bishop Francis Asbury. In his speech of dedication, at the time the statue was unveiled, President Coolidge declared, "America was born in a revival of Religion. Back of that revival were John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Francis Asbury." Certainly that remark, made with ample historical justice, carries more than hint that there is such a thing as a "Wesleyan heritage" which the eighteenth century has passed on to us of the twentieth century.

Or, take Sangster's statement, made near the opening of his recent volume on *The Path to Perfection*: "Most students who have taken in hand a study of modern 'holiness movements' have traced their origin to Wesley's teaching." One would understand Sangster to mean their proximate rather than their final origin. I suspect that these movements would insist that ultimately they trace their origin back to the Holy Scriptures, even as Wesley himself so emphatically claimed. But Sangster's comment is significant as pointing to the fact that the evangelical awakening of the 18th century, with Wesley as its spearhead and symbol, marked an epoch of far-reaching consequence in the history of the Christian Church and in the doctrinal development of Christian sanctity. It is, in fact, this particular aspect of the Wesleyan legacy that now concerns us.

John Wesley, to be sure, was not the

only instrument that God used in the fashioning of our heritage. Besides the men who had gone before him, such as Clement of Alexandria, Macarius of Egypt, St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas à Kempis, Tauler, and William Law—men to whom he stood more or less deeply in debt for their creative influence upon him—there were his associates who helped to give both range and color to the whole evangelical revival. Outstanding among these were John Fletcher, Adam Clarke, Richard Watson, Charles Wesley, Thomas Coke, and George Whitefield. Yet today, viewing the "awakening" through the perspective of 200 years, it is John Wesley's name upon which the church historian fixes as the guiding star of that amazing epoch. Indeed T. R. Glover, the distinguished ecclesiastical historian of Cambridge University, himself a Baptist, ranks Wesley with Paul, Augustine, and Luther as the four most important figures of the entire evangelical succession.

We are therefore justified, I take it, in using the adjective "Wesleyan" to describe this immense spiritual, theological, social, and ecclesiastical heritage which has come down to us from the 18th century. It is a vaster legacy than is dreamed by many of our contemporaries, even those who regard themselves as informed. I want to touch on some of these little-appreciated consequences of the 18th century revival when we come to the concluding address.

In this initial discussion I am venturing to set as our task a brief survey of the

doctrinal ground on which our Wesleyan heritage rests, with the particular intention of locating the points in the teaching and testimony of Christian Perfection that have been most open to debate. They might be called the points of strain in our theology. They are the areas in which our message has seemed, let us say, least convincing to those outside of the movement and where, at the same time, there are some obscurities and ambiguities even among those who stand within the tradition of Christian holiness.

As to what the Wesleyan position is, which comes under the scrutiny of friend and foe alike, it might, I suppose, be set out in the following simple, non-technical propositions:

1. Every Christian should aim at perfection.
2. That which is realizable in this life is the perfection of love.
3. Such love is ethical, that is, it involves the keeping of the moral law.
4. The perfection which consists of this love has freedom from sin as its implicate, sin being defined as a "voluntary transgression of a known law."
5. The experience of this Christian Perfection comes as a gift from God receivable instantaneously by faith.
6. To this experience God, by His Spirit, bears a witness of assurance, in which we may be as confident as we are of our justification.

These are the tenets—the things that may be said to characterize "Wesleyanism" whether in the "Methodism" of 18th century England or let us say the "Nazareneism" of 20th century America. We now ask, What criticisms, weaknesses or objections have been urged against any or all of these propositions, and what validity do the criticisms have?

# I

There is, to begin with, the objection that, while aiming at perfection is proper enough, all claims to attainment or realization are unscriptural, presumptuous and, as many would add, fanatical.

Practically the whole weight of Reformation theology, whether that of Luther or Calvin, is back of this criticism. You see it in Calvin's assertion that "sin always exists in the saints till they are divested of their mortal bodies." You see it in Luther's dictum that "the saints are always intrinsically sinners; that is why they are declared righteous extrinsically." You see it in the Barthian theology of today, as represented, for example, by Emil Brunner when he defines grace as the "justification of the sinner, who though justified, continues to the last days of his earthly life to be a sinner and is as much in need of forgiveness as on the day of his conversion." And you see it in the teaching of Reinhold Niebuhr who, in his Gifford Lectures under title of *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, insists that man is constitutionally and inevitably a sinner. After approving Schleiermacher's position that "to be tempted means in a sense to have sinned," he declares that temptation is a state of anxiety from which sin flows inevitably." If I have understood him correctly, Niebuhr would not say that it is a sin to be finite but he would say that we cannot be finite without being sinners.

Now to what extent are these objections valid? If they have any validity at all, it is limited, I should say, to the reminder they afford us that always we hold the treasure of grace in an earthen vessel and that, measured by a standard of absolute perfection, we are, even when redeemed by Christ, creatures of imperfection.

As for the weakness of the objections, two things may be urged against them. For one thing, they do not do justice to the strength and frequency of those passages in the New Testament in which sin is dealt with as conquerable through the grace of God and in which the life of the Christian is described as one in which sin is put away. It is a discerning and significant conclusion that is reached by Harnack in his *History of Dogma*, when, summing up the rise of Lutheranism, he says, "Through having the resolute wish to go back to *religion* and to it alone, [the Lutheran Church] neglected far too much



the moral problem, the *Be ye holy, for I am holy.*"

The other reply that may be made to the objections with which we are now dealing is this: They imply too large an emphasis on *Christ for us* and too mild an emphasis on *Christ in us*. *Christ for us* means pardon—pardon endlessly repeated, according to the view of the objectors, in order to cover the sins that are endlessly practiced. It would be unfair to say that Martin Luther, for example, had no vision of the power of *Christ in us*; but it would be quite within the facts, I am persuaded, if we were to say that his appreciation of this aspect of evangelical Christianity was not by any means as clear or full as it might have been. And this weakness prevails in lesser or greater degree in all theological systems in which there is despair of ever breaking the vicious circle of sin in the present life.

Is it a mere accident, or is there a profound Christian logic involved, when Paul, writing the last chapter of his Second Corinthian letter, raises the question, "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you?" and then goes on to say, quite flatly and confidently, "Do no evil . . . do that which is honest . . . be perfect . . . be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace?" Grace as *pardon* is our only hope with respect to an accusing past, but grace as *power* becomes our hope for a present and a future in which we may "serve God without fear in righteousness and holiness before him all the days of our life."

## II

We come now to a second point at which the Wesleyan teaching is said to be weak and in need of further clarification. According to this criticism it makes an "inadequate analysis of the nature of sin." Both Flew and Sangster, among contemporary writers, make this charge, and both of them are, on the whole, sympathetic with the idea of Christian Perfection.

Both scholars are of the opinion that Wesley tends, for example, to look upon man's depravity as a *thing*, a *quantum*, an

entity in itself, which can be removed like a cancer or a bad tooth. I suppose one might cite Wesley's statement, "There must be a last moment wherein it (sin) does exist and a first moment wherein it does not."

In fairness to Wesley it should be pointed out that he is no more guilty of speaking of sin as though it were an entity than is the Apostle Paul. Witness Paul's words in Romans 7: "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." What is important is *how* we are to interpret such language as this.

Flew is unquestionably right when he remarks that "sin is not a mere *thing*." Since it is a moral fact or phenomenon, our effort to conceptualize it leads us to employ metaphors. Sometimes the metaphors are obvious and sometimes they are implied. All of our thinking about spiritual realities shows more or less of this characteristic. So long as we realize that we *are* speaking in similes or metaphors, well and good. On the other hand, if we forget about it, confusion is bound to result and many a misguided argument is likely to arise.

Actually, of course, we cannot abstract sin from the personal agent, the man, who sins; nor can we abstract the quality of sinfulness from the living individual who is tainted. It is the individual himself who must be subjected to a change in which the acts of sins are no longer committed and of whom the corruption and disintegration of sin need no longer be affirmed.

We might well pause here to make an observation about the general relationship of theology to life and the more particular relationship of the theology of Christian holiness to the subtleties, the vitalities and the practicalities of life. All of our efforts to reduce life to rationally systematic form are in danger of sacrificing reality to logic. Theology tends to be static; life is always dynamic. Theology goes off in a corner and reduces religious phenomena to a set of neat, scrupulously defined propositions. We then go out and try to superimpose that system on life as we actually live it, and we find that inevitably there are com-



plications. By and large, I think it is a fair criticism of our traditional presentation of the doctrine of holiness to say that we have been too wooden in our approach.

That is to say, we have tended to overplay our hand in the use of illustrations and metaphors and create impressions of simplicity that are not true to life. We have resorted to the device of telling people that conversion is like cutting down the tree and entire sanctification like pulling out the stump and its roots. A much better illustration—one that is free from most if not all of the misleading implications of the tree-stump removal—is one in which we liken sin to a fever from which the body is suffering. The fever is not normal. An infection is indicated. The fever can be cured and the temperature returned to normal. On the other hand, there may be a recurrence of the fever if there is not a required observance of the conditions that make for the maintenance of health.

### III

We come now to a third point of stress where the Wesleyan thesis of Christian Perfection has been challenged. I refer to the teaching with regard to *assurance* and *testimony*. Take this from one friendly critic: "A man may bear testimony to his awareness of a God who is willing and able to 'destroy the last remains of sins.' He cannot know himself well enough to claim that God has already done it." Or this from Sangster: "Other men may feel sure that a saint is in their midst. But he himself will not say, 'I am freed from all sin.' Rather will he say with Paul, 'I judge not mine own self . . . He that judgeth me is the Lord.'"

Incidentally, Sangster gives us every reason to infer that he believes John Fletcher spoke the truth when, according to Hester Ann Rogers, he testified, "I am freed from sin." Sangster's objection is not to the possibility or the actuality of such a thing, but only to the public profession of it in that form.

Those of us who have been born and reared in the Wesleyan tradition are proba-

bly predisposed to accept rather uncritically the tremendous claim that one makes when he testifies that he is indeed delivered from all sin. Do we realize how solemn and immense a claim it really is? Do we realize what is implied in our declaration that we are sure it is so?

Professor Flew is positive that we do not adequately cover the point by saying that it is no more daring to testify to freedom from all sin than it is to testify to conversion and the forgiveness of sins. He insists that when I say, "I know God has forgiven my sins," it is primarily a conviction that I have about *God*. But when I say, "I know I am freed from all sin," it is primarily a conviction about *myself*. And of course the question immediately follows, Can I be trusted to know myself well enough to make the categorical claim that all sin is gone?

If I say, "At least I *feel* no sin," the insistent critic may reply, "But do you dare trust the emotion of a moment regarding so immense a claim as this?" In this connection it might be pointed out that Wesley himself seems at times to lack consistency in his statements. Writing to one Mrs. Maitland, on some of the perplexities of Christian Perfection, he says, "Whether sin is *suspended* or *extinguished*, I will not say. It is enough that they [professors of perfect love] feel no sin." On the other hand, to Thomas Olivers he wrote, "Barely to feel no sin, or to feel constant peace, joy and love, will not prove the point." Here he was insisting on the importance of the sanctified *will* as being more determinant than good feelings.

Furthermore, to the person who simply says, "I feel no sin, therefore no sin remains," it may be replied, "Yes, *you* feel no sin, but perhaps that is because you have a conscience that is lacking in sensitivity to sin."

Speaking for myself, I am honor-bound to say that I feel in some measure the force of this criticism. And our problem is not made easier by all the findings of contemporary psychology regarding the deceptions, the evasions, the rationalizations with which we mask our selfishness. As

someone has very shrewdly said, "The prayer of the publican may be no better than the prayer of the Pharisee, if it be written carefully in a Journal and published by his literary executor." Or, he might have added, recited at regular intervals as a crowd-catching "Life Story." It is possible, in other words, to put a crude manifestation of the ego out the front door only to have it reappear as a religiously robed ego at the back door.

Nor are we helped with this problem by the fact that in the Wesleyan tradition we emphasize the distinction between "carnality" and "humanity", between sin and infirmity, while at the same time the line between the two is admittedly so fine that we have never been able to draw it precisely or clarify it to the satisfaction of ourselves, least of all our critics. This was vividly impressed upon me recently in a meeting of Free Methodist ministers in the East. More than a hundred preachers were present when this topic came up. It was revealing—and a bit disconcerting—to follow the discussion and see what differences of opinion were to be found among those excellent men.

Mr. Wesley probably felt the pressure of these and other considerations and, knowing how prominent was his position in the evangelical movement, was exceedingly cautious about his personal witness to the realization of Christian perfection. In my own mind there is no doubt that he

*believed* he was a recipient of this grace. It must be admitted, however, that he was extremely reticent about announcing it in the form of a personal testimony.

What is the upshot of this survey of our position regarding assurance and testimony? Shall we concede that there is no place for personal testimony to the grace of perfect love with its correlate of expelled sin?

No, there is no call for us to concede so much. We must, however, allow for the possibility of self-deception or presumption. We must watch against spiritual pride, even as Wesley and Fletcher so fervently urged. What else?

I think we can afford to take the emphasis from *our* sinlessness and put it on *Christ's* fulness within us. If one testifies, "I am entirely sanctified," he at least commits the impropriety of making the ego the springboard of his announcement. It is manifestly better to say, "Christ is now, by faith, my Sanctifier and my confidence is that His blood cleanses my heart from all sin." With one of Professor Flew's conclusions it is difficult to disagree—unless, of course, we are committed to some species of "eternal security" for the sanctified. "Since holiness," says Flew, "is given in response to faith, and since faith is no mere single response but a continuous succession of responses to the divine Giver, it follows that the ideal life is a 'moment-by-moment' holiness."

# Some Observations on Pastoral Service

W. CURRY MAVIS

One of the encouraging aspects of contemporary American Christianity is found in the increased emphasis that is being placed upon pastoral service. This emphasis is evident in a growing body of literature in pastoral counseling, the ministry to the sick, and other forms of the person-to-person ministry. The pastoral emphasis is furthermore reflected in the curricula of many of the nation's leading seminaries where new courses in the field of pastoralogy are being added. The seminaries are becoming increasingly convinced that aptness and proficiency in certain classical fields as languages, philosophy and theology do not alone equip a young man for pastoral success. Finally a quickened interest in a ministry emphasizing person-to-person effort is seen in many of the churches of the nation. Ministers are increasingly setting up programs that are designed to give people personal guidance and assistance.

The Christian church has not always had its present vision of the importance of the person-to-person ministry. In long eras of its history, it relied largely upon certain aspects of public ministration in the carrying out of its task. At times its dominant emphasis has been upon public sacerdotal functions. At other times the center of attention has been on preaching. In its emphases upon these methods the church assumed that one or two services per week, though sometimes formal and stereotyped, should meet the varied and unique needs of the people. In some periods the church became so allured by the spectacular methods of mass evangelism that it felt its mission to the unconverted could be quite effectively carried out by that method. While the results of mass evangelism have been impressive, the fact remains that his-

tory has not validated this method as one that alone is capable of saving the world. Limitations of mass evangelism have been apparent in many periods of history, as at the present time, when the masses were not reached by this approach.

The object of this paper is to point out some facts that relate to the value and place of the person-to-person ministry in contemporary Christian service. It is not the design of this study to minimize the value of public worship and preaching. These Christian services have been vindicated long ago in Christian history. It is merely assumed here that the Christian task cannot be accomplished by public worship methods only.

The growing contemporary emphasis upon the pastoral ministry has solid foundations. First, the need for such a type of ministration is seen in the very nature of the Christian faith. The intrinsic impulses and fundamental purposes of the gospel of Christ cannot be accomplished apart from effective pastoral service. Secondly, the need for this type of religious service is indicated in the very nature of human experience. All other types of endeavor fail to meet some of man's basic needs.

## I

The need for effective pastoral service is inherent in the Christian faith. Christian idealism calls for a ministry devoted to the care of persons. The great Christian affirmations concerning the nature of religion assume the necessity of such a ministry. The Christian impulse finds its best expression in a ministry of helping persons.

A. One of the dominant impulses that gave rise to the creation of the pastoral ministry was the Christian concept of human worth. Jesus taught that human per-

sonality was invaluable. His teaching on this subject was basic, graphic and emphatic. He said that men were the children of God and were thus the object of Divine care (Matt. 10:29-31). He manifested his high regard for human personality by severely denouncing those who worked against the welfare of others (Matt. 18:7-10). He considered a man of greater worth than religious institutions (Mark 2:23-3:6). He taught that a person was of greater value than the whole universe (Mark 8:36, 37). He has been called "the champion of human personality".

Jesus Christ calls to every poor soul; he calls to every one who bears a human face; you are the children of the living God, and not only better than many sparrows but of more value than the whole world. . . . But Jesus Christ was the first to bring the value of the human soul to life, and what He did no one can undo. We may take whatever relation to him we will: in the history of the past no one can refuse to recognize that it was he who raised humanity to this level.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus' concept of the value of human personality was dynamic. It motivated him to minister personally to men. Herein he was different from the Roman and Greek philosophers. They too had a high concept of human worth. But they, even the Stoics, found it difficult to live up to their high idealism. Aristotle referred to the slave as a "living tool". The Stoic, Chrysippus, could conceive of happiness as only for the wise. He was pretty sure, however, that most men were fools. Even Seneca with all his pious idealism prayed, "Forgive the world, they are all fools". The Greek and Roman philosophers were generally "passively intellectual" about the worth of men. They lacked the *elan* to practice their own idealism by actually relieving the suffering of men.

Motivated by a profound appreciation of and love for men, the earthly ministry of Jesus was characterized by his personal attention in feeding the hungry, teaching the inquirers, forgiving the penitent, healing the sick and raising the dead. More

Synoptic attention is devoted to his personal contacts than to his public proclamations. Believing that man was of infinite worth, he spared no effort nor evaded any personal sacrifice in his attempt to redeem men. He died that man might be saved.

The Apostolic church, imbued with the spirit of its Lord and following his example, created the pastoral ministry as a new type of religious ministrations. The early Christians could do nothing other than that. They had caught Jesus' ideal of the high worth of man. They were possessed with a dynamic love that sought to express itself in helpfulness and service to all men. As an instance of this, consider the situation in the early days of the Jerusalem church. The apostles, acting as pastors, sought to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of the Christian group that was assembled there. Because of the multiplicity of their tasks proper provision was not given some of the Hellenist widows. The apostles appointed seven men to give particular attention to this problem. This was doubtless the beginning of the Christian diaconate. The pastoral ministry arose as a natural expression of the early Christian leaders in their attempts to implement their ideals of human worth.

In the later apostolic and post apostolic church the deacon's office was further developed because of the genuine Christian concern that existed for the welfare of believers. The early Christian communities experienced such rapid numerical growth that the pastor, bishop or presbyter could not personally care for the people. Deacons were appointed so that they might directly contact needy Christians. The early deacons were not primarily concerned with public worship, preaching or church administration. They were well characterized in a later day by *The Apostolic Constitutions* which called them "the ears and eyes and mouth and heart of the bishop." They were the church's agents in contacting the people. They were full-time field workers moving about in the early Christian communities taking physical and spiritual assistance to the believers.

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, Adolf, *What Is Christianity?*, pp. 72, 73.

B. The need for a person-to-person ministry is further indicated in the Christian concept of the inwardness of religion. This concept tends to indicate the nature of the Christian task. The faith that undertakes to continuously foster interior growth within its adherents has a much greater task than the religion that primarily emphasized the external aspects of life. Every educator knows that is easier to pass on a body of data to students than to develop basic personal attitudes. It is easier to teach the hands to perform a skill than to inspire the heart with a great ideal. The development of attitudes represents a fundamental achievement. It requires the response of the whole man as a rational-emotional-spiritual being. The teacher recognizes that the matter of developing right attitudes is usually slow. Often he is required to lead patiently the students by the use of factual material, guided experiences, and example into a more mature mental and spiritual disposition.

The matter of fostering continual development of the interior life is such a great task that it cannot be done in group meetings alone. The approaches of the priest, the prophet and the teacher need to be supplemented by the distinctly pastoral approach. The specialized services of the minister as prophet, priest or teacher are too narrow and limited to develop the interior life effectively. After the minister has given the people an inspirational challenge through his message as a prophet of God, has fervently prayed for them as a priest and has faithfully taught them as a teacher, there will still be a great need for the personal care, instruction and guidance of a shepherd-hearted man so that the worshippers may effectively develop internal spiritual insight and strength.

C. The need for pastoral service is further seen in the Christian idea that religion is co-extensive with life. Jesus taught that God is concerned with every act of man. All human behavior has religious significance. Paul expressed this concept when he said, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:13).

This concept has implications that concern religious ministration. If every human act has religious significance then much instruction and interpretation will be needed in order to indicate to perplexed persons what God's will is in complex and confused social situations. Guidance will be needed to assist people to make moral choices in accordance with the divine plan. In this area also the Christian task is not as simple as is the task of the ministrants of a faith where men believe that one may become religious once and for all time, by the acceptance of a creed or the formation of a few religious habits. Much nurture and guidance is needed in the task of helping the contemporary Christian meet the varying unique problems and situations of life intelligently and creatively. He must do this to live effectively for Christ in every area of his life. Such guidance assumes pastoral service.

## II

The person-to-person ministry is needed to supplement public worship for the latter can meet only a part of the needs of a part of the people. Many of the unique needs of worshippers remain unfulfilled after the benediction has been pronounced. On the other hand, vast groups of people seldom enter the house of God to appropriate to themselves the values of group worship. Both of these classes need the services of an effective person-to-person ministry in assisting them to solve basic and vexing problems of life.

A. Men need the counseling services of their pastor in solving their spiritual problems. The pastor as a specialist in spiritual life must personally help people with their individual religious needs as a lawyer gives personal guidance in legal problems and as a doctor ministers in the area of health. The legal and health problems of the people are so unique that neither the lawyer nor doctor has been able to substitute legal and medical lectures for personal attention. While the common elements in people's religious needs may be greater than in some other areas, the fact remains that people



have unique spiritual problems. This is true for a number of reasons. Every person, excepting an identical twin, has a unique biological inheritance. All people, even brothers and sisters, have an environment that is different from that of every other person. The choices of people as well as the accidents of life put every man in a unique situation.

Furthermore, every man is an amateur in the matter of living. Needs and problems change with increasing age. Human situations are affected by the flux and change in the material and social environment. People will always find themselves in unique and novel situations. At such times they need the guidance of one who is acquainted with basic spiritual and life problems.

In this matter of helping people spiritually, the pastor needs to assist them personally to relate spiritual principles to their own life problems. Basic Christian principles are not always understood. At such a time the parishioner needs instruction. At other times, people are aware of basic Christian truths but are unable to apply the known principles to their own problems. A similar fact is found in many areas of life. Men and women often have knowledge of basic data and theories without making that knowledge functional. But the differential between knowledge and practice is probably greatest in the area of personal religious living. This is largely due to the fact that there is a carnal drag in the human spirit. In Romans Paul graphically portrays how inward sin struggles against the application of great spiritual truth to personal life. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:22, 23). Paul taught that natural man would resist the application of spiritual truth to life.

There remains a spiritual lag of a different character in those who have obtained a state of heart purity through the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. In their

hearts the "law of sin and death" has been annulled. But often there is a hesitancy to apply spiritual principles to actual life situations. This hesitancy arises from the urgency of "things present" and the seeming unreality of "things not seen".

People tend to evade reality in religious matters. In Western culture persons begin early to develop ego-protective mechanisms. By youth many have a rather full complement of these mechanisms including rationalization and over-compensation. While these mechanisms operate in life generally, they especially become a great hindrance when spiritual problems arise. When faced with the need of making necessary confession or restitution, the person is most likely to seek to protect his ego or status by evading the demand. At times when self-denial is needed for effective Christian service people quite naturally experience an impulse to sidestep the issue. Jesus' word to the disciples is always contemporary. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34). Tempted to follow a course leading to ego-status and self interest, people have the impulse to exempt themselves from rigorous spiritual tasks and sacrifices. When these impulses are followed, people usually seek to justify their evasive action.

Through personal counseling the pastor has his best opportunity to help men and women face spiritual reality. At one time this was Nathan's mission to David. After David's two-fold sin of adultery and murder he had apparently rationalized his action. He had made Bathsheba his wife. It was by an ingenious parable that Nathan forced the king to realistically face himself and his sin. Without the personal prophetic rebuke and "counsel" David would likely have maintained a self-deceived attitude toward his sin.

A superb example of how a person may be led to face spiritual reality is seen in Jesus' consultation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Jesus wanted to assist the woman spiritually. However, she had been made ego-sensitive and shy by the rejection of her neighbors. She

was highly self-defensive. When Jesus directed the conversation to her own life she evaded the embarrassing references by raising impersonal theological questions concerning the advent of the promised Messiah and the nature of divine worship. Jesus finally shocked the woman by frankly raising the question of her sin. His statement, "Thou hast had five husbands already", cleared away the hypocritical mist that had hindered him in helping her. Rapport was established, for no moral hedging was then necessary. The woman became a believer.

Jesus brought the woman to face spiritual reality by the moral shock method. Here is one place where pastoral counseling differs from other types of consultation. The psychiatrist and other professional counselors seldom use this technique. In fact, many counselors consider it to be bad. The pastor will have need of it. However, this technique must be used carefully. In any specific case it will be impossible to accurately predict beforehand what the result of the contemplated moral shock treatment will be. As in the case of Jesus, it may be happy. It may lead the counselee to realistically face his problem. On the other hand, it may so destroy the rapport between the pastor and the parishioner that further counseling is impossible. The moral shock treatment should be used only when the counseling situation appears favorable and after other methods have failed.

B. The person-to-person ministry constitutes an effective supplement to corporate worship in the matter of assisting worshippers to solve their more difficult personal problems. The contribution that corporate worship makes in this area should not be overlooked. By the reading of the Word and by preaching, worshippers receive courage to face life with its difficulties. Divine strength is given to the frustrated and confused through the ministry of prayer. Insight may come to perplexed people at any moment in the service. However, after any single worship service has made its maximum contribution many worshippers need the personal attention of a wise counselor.

The person-to-person ministry makes a direct approach to people's unique personal problems. Necessarily corporate worship tends to make an indirect approach. The latter deals with general principles and with characteristic life situations. In the very nature of the case no one man's need can be dealt with specifically.

A few years ago Dean Inge succinctly pointed out the limitation of this method of approach. The dean suggested that if a person had a large number of narrow-necked bottles which he desired to fill with water, he would not set them in a group on the floor and spray water over them hoping to get each filled. He would rather take each bottle in his hand and place it under a faucet.

The limitation of corporate worship in meeting unique personal needs is obvious. In every congregation there is a wide variety of individual problems. One man may be anxious about the loss of his job. Another may be concerned about the illness of a child. Another person may be saddened because of the death of a member of his family. A youth may be trying to decide about attending college. Another young person may be considering marriage. Besides such common personal problems, there may be peculiar one represented in the congregation. Human need is broad. In no service could a pastor make specific suggestion that would help all those who were perplexed. Many of the confused people would find it difficult to apply great life principles to their own situations. In times of personal perplexity the parishioner needs his pastor to assist him in analyzing his difficulty and outlining a method of solving it. The pastor can do a number of helpful things in this area.

First, the pastor can assist the counselee in gaining insight into his problem by encouraging a free expression of all the significant elements in the situation. This is especially necessary where the emotional factors are large. Unexpressed emotional attitudes become barriers to objective thinking. The pastor will need to assist the parishioner to reach a place of emotional objectivity so that he can think rationally.

The expression of ideas usually helps in the thinking process. Most people can more readily gain insight by active interaction with another than by brooding over a problem alone.

Every parishioner needs to find a wise and considerate person in his pastor so that he may talk over important personal problems. Often the mere process of outlining the problem will bring insight. A contemporary college teacher and counselor recently gave a vivid example of this phenomenon. A college boy had come to her for counsel. The student started to relate his difficulty but after saying a few words he became emotionally disturbed and began to speak in a low and inarticulate voice. The counselor asked the young man to repeat what he had said. He started again but after a few sentences again spoke so inarticulately that he could not be understood. The counselor then explained that her hearing was not good and she asked that the lad repeat his story more loudly and clearly. The young man started again only to repeat the procedure of the other two times. The counselor did not ask the young man to go over the account again but sat attentively feigning comprehension of his story. Upon finishing his account, the young man became emotionally composed, arose and thanked the counselor for solving his problem for him. On referring to this incident several months later the counselor remarked that she had not learned at the time, nor later, what the lad's actual problem was. Her helpfulness was in providing the student a favorable opportunity to outline his problem. Personal insight came with analysis of the situation.

Second, the pastor can assist the parishioner to relate his present enigma to the whole of his life. Perplexed persons often over-emphasize their problems because of their mistaken ideas. At such times the pastor needs to clarify the confused viewpoints. At other times people lose a proper perspective because they get too "near" to their problems. Their present situation appears so large that it obscures other important considerations. This often causes the perplexed to act impulsively and ir-

rationally in trying situations. The pastor-counselor can greatly assist the counselee by helping him to relate his present difficulty to the whole of life.

Third, the pastor can help the counselee outline a plan of solution for his difficulty. Sometimes the mere insight into the perplexing situation will suggest the logical plan of procedure. At other times this is not true. Then the pastor-counselor will need to assist in evaluating the counselee's suggestion for solution of the problem. Furthermore, he can suggest various positive steps that the counselee should take. In doing this the pastor-counselor will always remember that he is first of all a Christian and he will draw upon the great Christian therapeutic resources, such as prayer, faith, worship, and the reading of the Word.

### III

In the light of historic precedent and present need contemporary churchmen should provide for an effective person-to-person ministry.

First, this implies that ministers shall be carefully trained for personal service. Perhaps our seminaries have been weaker in this area than in any other. As medical colleges train prospective doctors in the techniques and skills of diagnosis and therapy so the ministerial training centers should train ministerial candidates to diagnose and assist in curing personal and spiritual ills. Ministers who have missed this training during their seminary days can greatly strengthen their effectiveness in personal service by private reading.

Second, the provision for an effective person-to-person ministry will mean that many larger churches would need to increase the size of their ministerial staff. Perhaps there should be a full time minister for every five or six hundred members. Parishioners will welcome adequate provision for personal counseling and other forms of pastoral service. More than ever before people are going to professional counselors for personal assistance. Young people consult with educational, recreation-

al and community leaders. Adults consult psychiatrists, practising psychologists, industrial counselors, social workers, lawyers and doctors about personal problems. The desire for personal guidance is probably greater than heretofore. There are two reasons for this. There is greater actual need for consultation and guidance because of the complexity of contemporary life. Because of our complex social situation personal problems have become more intricate, involved and difficult. Furthermore, with the developing art of counseling, people have come to realize the value that inheres in personal guidance. Christians

prefer a counselor with a Christian perspective of life. Herein is a great opportunity for the Christian minister.

Third, all of the person-to-person service should not be performed by salaried staff members. Laymen should share in this task. Unless adequately trained, they will not undertake to do specialized counseling. They can, however, be greatly useful in personal evangelistic efforts and kindred activities. They too will need training for this work. The pastor has few tasks that are more important than that of inspiring, training and guiding his laymen in personal evangelistic efforts.

## Our Heritage

L. D. ROUNDS

Careful students of the life of St. Paul will agree that he was a strategist and a diplomat of more than ordinary ability. In his ardent desire for success in the propagation of the Gospel, he never failed to declare openly both his earthly and his heavenly citizenship. When questioned in Jerusalem as to his allegiance it was with a marked degree of pride that he said, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of *no mean* city." (Acts 21:39) This was perhaps not diplomacy, but a statement of fact, fortified by a fearless pride.

The city, or the institution, from which a person comes can be the means of embarrassment or of holy pride. Undoubtedly, there will be occasions when the facts MUST and SHOULD be stated. Whether those facts shall cause embarrassment or pride depends upon the city or institution in question and the individual concerned. Yet, the attitude of the person will determine which emotion shall be dominant. The Apostle gave the unmistakable impression of a glowing pride in the city of his birth. Had his spirit been one of hesitancy and apology, his argument would have been worthless and even contemptible.

The alumni of Asbury Theological Seminary have repeated opportunities for expressing to the world their feeling of Christian pride in the institution which prepared and sent them forth. Certainly its academic standing is above reproach, having been fully accredited by the American Association of Theological Schools and approved by the University Senate of The Methodist Church. Its consecrated faculty also stands well in the ranks of Christian educators and leaders. The scope of its curriculum, and the fearless facing of all philosophic issues and theories demands the respect of all. The truly remarkable material expansion and progress which is constantly in evidence, and that without aid of Church or other organization, signally sets it forth as being unique. From year to year its capacity enrollment and ever increasing list of application for admission, speak loudly of its growing popularity among those who are interested in Kingdom service. The insistent demand for its graduates, by District Superintendents and other Church leaders, is one of its highest recommendations. The wholesome spiritual atmosphere on the campus, always evident to visitors who possess any degree of spiritual discernment, is proof positive of God's blessings upon the school.

A careful evaluation of all these evidences leads to the inevitable conclusion that, as alumni of this institution, we have every right to be proud. Whenever the opportunity presents itself for us to reveal our educational allegiance, we can hold our heads high, and rejoice in the character of our *alma mater*.

This is just another way of saying that we should readily recognize the debt we owe, and by prayer and every possible co-operation support the institution which has made us. The best we can give or do will never equal the richness of our heritage.



# The Influence of Paul Gerhardt Upon Evangelical Hymnody

ANNE W. KUHN

Paul Gerhardt is undoubtedly the David of German hymnody. Born at Grafenhainichen in Saxony in 1607, his career of sixty-nine years coincided with the Thirty Years' War and the tragic transitional period which followed these three decades of pillage and pestilence. He is still the sweet singer of the Fatherland to all true sons of Germany. Some scholars have termed him "the George Herbert of Germany" for the cultured refinement of his poetic expression; but whereas Herbert's hymns are spiritual gems set in poems of such beauty as to be understandable only to the select few, the hymns of Paul Gerhardt are for the everyday congregation. His hymns are not only a reflection of his troubled times but also a biography in poetry setting forth the disappointments in his own career, the aspirations of his own inward life, and his unflinching faith in the goodness and love of God. In contrast to the objective hymns of the great Luther, Gerhardt's hymns were subjective, devotional and in the best sense pietistic.

As a watchman waits for day,  
And looks for light, and looks again  
When the night grows old and grey,  
To be relieved he calls again;  
So look, so wait, so long my eyes  
To see, my Lord, thy Sun arise!

The writer purposes in this study to examine some of Gerhardt's hymns, with special reference to the manner in which they influenced, directly and indirectly, the hymnody of the Evangelical Revival in England. The article is not a critical or historical essay on the work of Gerhardt, nor a survey of German Pietism, with

which his name is correctly linked. It is rather designed as an appreciation of the man who by universal consent was called "the prince of Lutheran poets."

In a sense, such an investigation will be also the tracing of the pilgrimage of a soul. Inasmuch as our times parallel those of Gerhardt, the lure of such a pilgrimage may prove to be attractive to men of our times.

## I

Gerhardt's most famous hymn is his translation of Bernard of Clairvaux' "*Salve Caput Cruentatum*" ("*O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*").<sup>1</sup> This Passion chorale translates as follows:

O sacred head once wounded  
With grief and pain weighed down,  
How scornfully surrounded  
With thorns, Thine only crown!  
How pale art Thou with anguish,  
With sore abuse and scorn!  
How doth Thy visage languish  
Which once was bright as morn!

O Lord of life and glory,  
What bliss till now was Thine!  
I read the wondrous story,  
I joy to call Thee mine.  
Thy grief and Thy compulsion  
Were all for sinners' gain;  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
But Thine the deadly pain.

What language shall I borrow  
To praise Thee, heavenly Friend,

<sup>1</sup> There is a question now concerning Bernard's authorship of this hymn. There is evidence for and against the traditional belief at this point. Such an authority as H. Augustine Smith ascribes the original to Arnulf von Loewen, 1200-1250.

For this, Thy dying sorrow,  
Thy pity without end?  
Lord, make me Thine forever,  
Nor let me faithless prove;  
Oh, let me never, never  
Abuse such dying love.

Be near me, Lord, when dying;  
O, show Thyself to me;  
And for my succour flying,  
Come, Lord, to set me free.  
These eyes, new faith receiving  
From Jesus shall not move;  
For he who dies believing,  
Dies safely through Thy love.

This hymn is sung throughout Germany on Good Friday, usually to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach in his famous St. Matthew's Passion. To what extent Christian liberty in song was suppressed by the late regime is difficult to determine. It is safe to venture, however, that no rise and fall of governments can eradicate from German Protestantism its love for this hymn.

St. Bernard (if indeed he wrote the original) entitled his hymn "A rhythmical prayer to any one of the members of Christ suffering and hanging on the Cross". The original manuscript is not in existence, and the oldest copy now extant (possibly copied from the original) was not found until the fourteenth century. In its earliest form, the hymn was long, being divided into seven parts, each addressed to a part of the Body of Christ. The portion which Gerhardt so correctly translated is addressed to "the Face of Jesus".<sup>2</sup>

When the well-known German missionary, Schwartz, who preceeded Henry Martyn to India, lay dying after fifty years of incessant labor among the heathen, it was Gerhardt's hymn which he chanted. Surrounded by his sorrowing Malabar pupils, he passed away with its echoes in his soul. This is but one instance of the power of this chorale to sing its way into the hearts of the faithful.

Of Gerhardt's version Philip Schaff says,

The English translation was by James W. Alexander, a Presbyterian minister and professor.

This classical hymn has shown an imperishable vitality in passing from the Latin into the German, and from the German into the English, and proclaiming with equal effect in three tongues, and in the name of three creeds—the Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Reformed—the dying love of our Saviour and our boundless indebtedness to Him.

While the English translation of this hymn did not find an immediate place in Wesleyan hymnody, the spirit of it was caught by Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley. Their themes and their style reflect its mood and its message.<sup>3</sup>

John Wesley translated a number of Gerhardt's hymns into English. Several of these have remained in use to the present time. Some of the hymns which we attribute to Wesley are really Gerhardt's. Here are two verses of one of the Saxon's hymns which John Wesley translated.<sup>4</sup>

My Saviour! how shall I proclaim,  
How pay the mighty debt I owe?  
Let all I have, and all I am  
Ceaseless to all Thy glory show.

Too much to Thee I cannot give;  
Too much I cannot do for Thee;  
Let all Thy love and all Thy grief,  
Graven on my heart for ever be.

The following is one of Gerhardt's best known hymns, sung almost as much in England as in Germany. Written under title of "*Befiel' du deine Wege*" it was translated by Wesley in 1739.

Commit thou all thy griefs  
And ways into His hands,  
To His sure truth and tender care,  
Who heaven and earth commands.

Who points the clouds their course,  
Whom winds and seas obey,  
Who shall direct thy wandering feet;  
He shall prepare thy way.

Thou on the Lord rely,  
So safe shalt thou go on,  
Fix on His work thy steadfast eye,  
So shall thy work be done.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Dickinson, *Music in the History of the Western Church* (New York: Scribners, 1902), pp. 379f.

<sup>4</sup> There are nine stanzas in the original.

No profit canst thou gain  
By self-consuming care;  
To Him commend thy cause; His ear  
Attends the softest prayer.

Thy everlasting truth,  
Father, Thy ceaseless love  
Sees all Thy children's wants, and knows  
What best for each will prove.

When Thou arisest, Lord,  
What shall Thy work withstand?  
Whate'er Thy children want Thou givest,  
And who shall stay Thy hand?

The spirit of this English translation is remarkably like that of the original. May it not be that John Wesley was able to transcribe the mood and rhythm of this hymn so accurately because his circumstances at this point in his career were so like those of Gerhardt?

Around this hymn have grown up a number of interesting traditions, describing the remarkable rôle which it has played in ministering to those in distress. Of these the following is a representative sample.<sup>5</sup>

A German peasant called Dober, who lived in a village near Warsaw, was to be evicted on the morrow with his family amid the snows of winter, because he could not pay his rent. In the evening, gathering wife and children around him, he prayed with them, and then joined with them in this hymn; as they reached the last verse, a raven which his grandfather had tamed and set at liberty, tapped at the window. In its bill was a ring set with precious stones. The peasant took it to the minister. It was found to belong to the King, Stanislaus. When the minister told the King the story he sent for Dober, gave him a handsome reward, and the next year built him a new house, and filled its cattle sheds from his own estates. Over the door was an iron tablet, bearing the representation of a raven with a ring in its bill, and the verse which I previously omitted in the above hymn:

Thou everywhere hast sway,  
And all things serve Thy might,  
Thy every act pure blessing is,  
Thy path unsullied light.

The richest period of German hymnology

<sup>5</sup> This account was given by Dr. H. Augustine Smith to a class in sacred music in 1941. Similar accounts in connection with the same hymn may be found in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, (revised edition, reprint of 1925), pp. 125.

was that of the devastation, moral as well as physical of the years, 1618-1648. The darkness of this era of near-barbarism called forth a new return to faith in God, a new expression of hope in spite of darkest national calamity.

This pious confidence, this unabated poetic glow, found in Paul Gerhardt the most fervent and refined expression that has been reached in German hymnody.<sup>6</sup>

In common with the devout of his time, Gerhardt frequently sought relief from earth's cares in contemplation of Heaven's joys, as the following hymn testifies:

O Christ! how good and fair  
Will be my portion, where  
Thine eyes on me shall rest  
And make me fully blest,  
When from this narrow earth  
To Thee I shall spring forth!

Oh thou, poor passing earth,  
What are thy treasures worth  
Beside those heavenly crowns,  
And more than golden thrones,  
Which Christ hath treasured there  
For those who please Him here!

This is the angel's land  
Where all the blessed stand!  
Hear, I hear nought but singing  
See all with glory springing;  
Here is no cross, no sorrow,  
No parting on the morrow!

It is easy to discern in the mood of this hymn the heart-beat of the Evangelical Revival in England.

Gerhardt's temperament and his religion alike served to make him cheerful, and the many disappointments of his life seem never to have embittered him. He always maintained a tender heart and a scrupulous conscience. His portrait in the church in Luebben bears the inscription, "Theologus in cribro Satanae versatus," i.e., a divine sifted in Satan's sieve. Attention will be given later in this study to some of the trying details of his life and ministry, and to the manner in which Gerhardt met his problems.

John Wesley, in his *Plain Account of*

<sup>6</sup> Dickinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 265f.

*Christian Perfection*,<sup>7</sup> says:

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence (Savannah, his first appointment after his ordination, and where he seemed to have failed so miserably) the cry of my heart was:

Oh, grant that nothing in my soul  
May dwell, but Thy pure love alone;  
Oh, may Thy love possess me whole,  
My joy, my treasure, and my crown.  
Strange fancies from my heart remove,  
My every act, word, thought, be love!

Evangelicals think when they join in this well-known hymn, which has become part of English religious life, that they are singing one of Wesley's hymns; in a sense they are, but the original words are those of Paul Gerhardt. His first verse reads:

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me  
No thought can reach, no tongue declare;  
Oh, knit my thankful heart to Thee,  
And reign without a rival there!  
Thine, wholly Thine alone I am  
Be Thou alone my constant flame!

Thomas Walsh, converted Irish Romanist of Limerick, was in the habit of singing the third verse of the above hymn with something like holy rapture:

O love, how cheering is thy ray!  
All pain before thy presence flies,  
Care, anguish, sorrow melt away  
Where'er thy healing beams arise.  
O Jesu, nothing may I see,  
Nothing desire or seek but Thee!

## II

In 1907 Germany celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of Gerhardt's birth. A greater tribute to his genius as a poet, or to his greatness as a preacher of righteousness could hardly be paid to any man than this, that an entire empire should pause in its national pursuits, in public as well as in private sing over again his songs, and recall his fights for truth and tolerance, while the emperor extolled him as a shining example of self-sacrifice and Christian purpose. In the words of Wilhelm II, "None had done more for the advancement

of religion in Germany than the singer, Paulus Gerhardt."

Gerhardt's musical contribution to the world of Evangelical religion can be best appreciated in the light of the problems which he faced in the world of his day. Some biographical details will therefore be of value at this point. Son of the burgo-master of Grafenhainichen (in Saxony), he was well-educated. At the same time he lived no sheltered life; emerging from his school days, he found himself amid the confusion of the Thirty Years' War. He shared to the full, along with his contemporaries, the sorrows, disappointments, and humiliations of that direful conflict.

As a young man he had frequently to take his place beside his fellow-citizens and defend the hearth and home of his parents. He was compelled to wait until he was forty-five years of age before he was ordained and before he could secure a pastorate. Only then was he able to marry the beautiful woman whom for long years he had loved, but to whom he could not earlier offer a home. It was in these disappointing years of waiting that he composed some of his most popular hymns, among which the following ought to be quoted:

How shall I meet Thee? How my heart  
Receive her Lord aright?  
Desire of all the earth, Thou art!  
My hope, my sole delight!  
Kindle the lamp, Thou Lord, alone  
Half-dying in my breast,  
And make Thy gracious pleasure known,  
How I may greet Thee best!

Her budding boughs and fairest palms  
Thy Zion strews around;  
And songs of praise and sweetest psalms  
From my glad heart shall sound.  
My desert soul breaks forth in flowers,  
Rejoicing in Thy fame;  
And puts forth all her sleeping powers,  
To honor Jesu's name.

In heavy bonds I languished long,  
Thou com'st to set me free;  
The scorn of every mocking tongue—  
Thou com'st to honour me.  
A heavenly crown wilt Thou bestow,  
And gifts of priceless worth,  
That vanish not as here below,  
The fading wealth of earth!

<sup>7</sup> Section 7.

It requires little imagination to discern in this hymn the basic spirit underlying the famous hymns of Charles Wesley, with their "hungering and thirsting after righteousness."

The poet, famous at forty-five for his hymns, was invited to the pastorate of the Church of St. Nicolai, in Berlin. Here his influence spread rapidly throughout Germany. A few years later his patron, the great Elector of Brandenburg, sought to interfere with Gerhardt's liberty of preaching. Refusing to subscribe to the edicts of June 2, 1662 and September 16, 1664, which he felt to be subversive to the interests of the Lutheran Church, and which he felt to represent an attempt to force the Reformed doctrine of predestination upon his Church, he was dismissed from his pastorate in 1666.

Gerhardt did not seek a quarrel, but was drawn forcibly into this controversy. The Elector doubtless meant well, wishing to terminate the long controversy between the two sections of the Reformed Church. But he was too masterful in action, while Gerhardt was overly conscientious, and displayed a want of tact in dealing with the really pious prince. He was primarily concerned with keeping a clear conscience; and with the exception of some written statements to the Elector, his dealings with the Magistrate, the Stande, and the Elector were kindly and conciliatory.

When it became apparent that he could not with a good conscience accept the condition which the Elector placed upon his preaching, he went forth with his family, a homeless wanderer. At a little country inn which they reached in the evening, Gerhardt, distressed by his helplessness and his inability to comfort his weeping wife and children, went out into the woods to pray. Suddenly the words of the Psalm came to him: "Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

The words brought not only rest and comfort, but inspiration; for he rose from his knees and as he walked to and fro under the trees that calm evening, he composed a hymn that has given strength to

thousands. Full of confidence in God, he returned to his humble inn, and read the following verses to his wife:

Give to the winds thy fears,  
Hope and be undismayed;  
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears,  
God shall lift up thy head.  
Through waves, through clouds and storms,  
He gently clears the way;  
Wait thou His time: so shall the night  
Soon end in joyous day.

Still heavy is thy heart?  
Still sink thy spirits down?  
Cast off the weight, let fear depart,  
But every care be gone!  
What though thou rulest not?  
Yet heaven and earth and hell  
Proclaim, God sitteth on the throne,  
And ruleth all things well!

Leave to His sovereign sway  
To choose and to command;  
So shalt thou, wondering, own His way,  
How wise, how strong His hand.  
Far, far above thy thought  
His counsel shall appear;  
When fully He the work hath wrought  
That caused thy needless fear.

Thou seest our weakness, Lord,  
Our hearts are known to Thee;  
Oh, lift Thou up the sinking head,  
Confirm the feeble knee!  
Let us in life, in death  
Thy steadfast truth declare,  
And publish with our latest breath  
Thy love and guardian care.

When the good pastor had finished reading the hymn, even his wife was cheered by the thought that God would indeed take care of them. The family had hardly retired to the their humble room before a loud and imperative knock was heard, rousing the whole house. A messenger stood at the door holding a sealed packet for Pastor Gerhardt. The surprised doctor, with his trembling wife, opened the packet and to their great joy found an invitation from the Duke of Meresberg, offering him "Church, people, home and livelihood, with liberty to preach the Gospel as your heart may prompt you."

Full of gratitude, the little party now journeyed to Luebben, where Gerhardt became archdeacon. Here he lost, first his



wife and then his little son, occasions which drew other imperishable songs from his soul. Seven years later he himself passed away, with the words of one of his own songs on his lips:

Us, no death has power to kill.

Like Luther, Gerhardt was more poet than musician. Both were fortunate to have men of like mind and heart to set their hymns to suitable music. If Luther had his Johann Walther, Gerhardt has his Johann Crueger. To understand the permanent mark which Gerhardt left upon Evangelicalism in Germany, it is essential to know something of Pietism, a movement which is popularly associated with his name. It is too simple to regard Pietism as a mere protest against a rigid and barren orthodoxy. Rather, it is a continuation of many of the principles of primitive Lutheranism, and stemmed from the very heart of the Lutheran Reformation.<sup>9</sup> Gerhardt is notable in this connection for his pioneering in the field of the inner life; for it was in the year of his dismissal from St. Nicolai that Spener was appointed pastor in Frankfort, while the *Pia Desideria* of the latter was published but a year before Gerhardt's death. Not until six years later were the *collegia pietatis* made into public gatherings. Thus Gerhardt expressed the spirit of Pietism before Francke and Spener had laid the real foundations for their work, and before Francke, Anton and Breithaupt were appointed to their chairs at Halle.

### III

It is impossible to determine just how greatly the leaders of the Pietistic movement were influenced by Gerhardt's hymnody. To say the least, he put into verse much that was formulated into sermons several decades later. Had Pietism followed Gerhardt's thesis, that the Chris-

tian life is the soundest and purest form of human life, and had it avoided depreciating the Bible, the sacraments, and the ministerial office, it might have avoided the attacks of J. Deutschmann and Valentin Ernst Loescher, and—worse still—the sentimentalization of its teachings.

Gerhardt preserved in Germany the more enduring legacy of the Pietistic movement. While Pietism, in its seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century form, was largely submerged in the ongoing of German religious thought, Gerhardt's hymns retain their power to inspire the heart and challenge the soul. Considered by historians to be the greatest hymn writer Germany has produced, he continues to sing his way wherever German hymns are sung.

Something needs to be said at this point in comparison of the hymnody of Luther with that of Gerhardt. From the standpoint of the number of hymns written, the latter was, of course more prolific. The best authorities attribute less than ten hymns directly to Luther; Gerhardt's number about 120.<sup>10</sup> But such a comparison is superficial; the real question is that of the style and content of their respective hymns. Luther's hymns were usually objective, and frequently militant. Those of Gerhardt were subjective, expressive of quiet trust, and replete with references to the intimate relationship between the soul and God. Each had its ministry to perform; the one type served to balance the other. Taken together, the two blended into a balanced whole.

The songs of both Luther and Gerhardt have stood the ruthless test of time, but when the works of the two are compared, the palm must be given to Gerhardt for affording real spiritual insight, and for proffering help in every phase and circumstance of human life. Living in times comparable to those through which Germany is passing today, he mirrored with exquisite delicacy and admirable fidelity the deepest aspirations of man confronted by God and met by His *Krisis*. His hymns

<sup>9</sup> But for a contrary opinion see Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (2nd English Edition, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), p. 84.

<sup>10</sup> A. W. Wilson, *The Chorales* (London, The Faith Press, 1920), pp. 26, 12.

are the mirror held up to the soul, wherein it may read itself. In consequence, one seldom turns to Gerhardt's songs in vain. He has a word of warning, of comfort, of hope, of joy, or of assurance for every one. In sorrow, in rejoicing, in health and in sickness, in the homeland or on the journey, in time of war and in the day of peace, at the altar or by the cradle, at the bedside and at the grave, he strikes with unerring fingers the chords of the human heart.

It is small wonder that for spontaneity, simplicity and purity of expression he is the greatest favorite (among foreign hymn-odists) in England. To understand his influence in Britain, it is necessary to bear in mind that prior to 1600 there were few English hymns suitable to congregational use. Noble sacred poetry there was, but these poems were, as it has been well said, "too subtle and fanciful" ever to come home to the hearts of the people. This is due to at least two influences: first, the large adherence of the English Church of the period to Roman usage; and second, the Puritan prohibition of all hymns except rhymed paraphrases of the Psalms. Thus there was no upsurge of congregational hymn singing in the English Church of the sixteenth century comparable to that in Luther's day. This must wait for nearly a century and a half—until the circulation of Gerhardt's hymns.

Such hymns as did exist in England prior to 1625 were written for the choice few to enjoy. They were full of subtle allusions, half the pleasure of which was derived from the exercise of ingenuity required to understand them. Such could never be sung, like Luther's, by little children at Christmas, nor as a nation's battle song. Still less could they distill peace at moments when heart and flesh failed and mortal effort was impossible, when the soul had lost its power to cling to anything. England must wait for Isaac Watts—or perhaps better, until the Wesleyan Revival, before she could enter the hymn-singing era.

#### IV

It is a commonplace that the Wesleyan

movement was a singing movement, and that as Luther had his Walther, John Wesley had his brother Charles. To trace the influence of Gerhardt's hymns upon John Wesley and his gifted brother, one must take into account a number of factors, most of them indirect. Attention was called earlier in this study to the fact that John Wesley translated several of Gerhardt's hymns into English. Of perhaps greater significance was the fact that he learned German, this indicating that he expected knowledge of this language to yield him important contacts with newer movements on the Continent. Doubtless his interest in, and contacts with, the Moravians served as an incentive to this.

The degree to which Wesley's thinking was shaped by the Saxon poet must be understood, not only in terms of the effort which he put forth in the translation of his hymns, but in the light of the type of hymnody which came from the pens of both the Wesleys. The temptation is strong, in a study of this kind, to exaggerate the degree to which Wesley's beliefs were derived from the poems of Gerhardt. Accuracy demands the recognition that John Wesley was an Anglican, and differed rather greatly from the Pietism of seventeenth century Germany. His background lacked the physical factors, such as the devastation of the Thirty Years' War, and the consequent famine and poverty, which were so powerful in shaping the thought of Gerhardt.

Umphrey Lee observes that the doctrine for which Wesley is justly most famous, namely Christian Perfection, was not derived from German Pietism, but from the Bible, Jeremy Taylor, and William Law.<sup>20</sup> Around this doctrine, and related principles, he developed an essentially British Pietism. Some hold that his Evangelicalism was radically different from Pietism in Germany. This seems to the writer to be an extreme view.

A comparison of Gerhardt's hymns with the general tenor of Wesley's teaching

<sup>20</sup> Umphrey Lee, *John Wesley and Modern Religion* (Nashville, Cokesbury, 1936), p. 110.

seems to yield the conclusion that the underlying atmosphere of that teaching is identical with that of the hymns which he translated from the German. Outstanding among the parallel ideas is that of the close relation between God and His world. It is important to remember that the thought of England at that time was still dominated by the Newtonian physics, with its mechanistic and lifeless view of the world. Wesley certainly derived his ideas at this point from some source. Now, the hymns of Gerhardt which he translated speak of the close correlation of God with the world. The following are illustrative of this:

Through waves, and clouds, and storms,  
He gently clears the way;  
Wait thou his time, so shall this night  
Soon end in joyous day.

\* \* \*

Who points the clouds their course  
Whom winds and seas obey,  
He shall direct thy wandering feet,  
He shall prepare thy way.

\* \* \*

Thou everywhere hast sway,  
And all things serve thy might;  
Thy every act pure blessing is,  
Thy path unsullied light.

Indirect evidence for this influence of Gerhardt upon Wesley is to be found in the manner in which some of his hymns, appearing in Wesley's translations, have become known in the popular mind as Wesleyan hymns. The writer has examined a representative group of hymnals,<sup>11</sup> and finds that each of these contains from five to eight of Gerhardt's hymns, most of them having come through John Wesley's translation, a few through the work of Catherine Winkworth. That these hymns, written three centuries ago and by a man of whom relatively so little is known outside of Germany should have such a firm place

in modern hymnals of the major denominations, is a remarkable testimony to their vitality. Interestingly enough, in the latest edition of the Methodist Hymnal, some of these hymns are indexed, not under *Gerhardt*, but under *John Wesley*, though credit is given to the German author on the pages where the music occurs.

These facts indicate that Wesley translated these hymns of Gerhardt because of his interest in them, and—we believe—his kinship of spirit with them. This is the more remarkable in view of the fact that he learned a relatively little-known (in England) language and that he went back over a century for his materials. He has derived from them, not so much his doctrinal tenets as his attitudes toward nature, providence, and the availability of God to human petition. In short, we may attribute much of the inwardness of John Wesley's religious emphasis, and of the spiritual warmth of his outlook, to the impact of Gerhardt's hymns upon his life and thought.

A final link in the chain of evidence is found in the fact that without the usual antecedents, a new tradition in hymnody appeared in England in the time of the Wesleyan awakening. Theological factors alone would hardly account for the appearance of the hymns of Isaac Watts and of the Wesleys, following so closely upon the steps of the relatively barren period in hymnody following the English Reformation. Taken together with the fact that the hymnody of the Evangelical Revival is so obviously in the spirit of Gerhardt, this affords further evidence of the influence of Paul Gerhardt upon the hymnody of the period. This influence appears to have been quite out of proportion to the numbers of his hymns which appeared in English translation. His spirit seems to have been contagious; imbued by it, the Wesleyan Revival sang its way into the hearts of millions in England, and shortly to countless others in the New World.

<sup>11</sup> The Methodist Hymnal, The Baptist Hymnal, The Presbyterian Hymnal, The Episcopal Hymnal, The Advent Christian Hymnal, New Church Hymnal, The Hymnal for American Youth and The Congregational Hymnal.

# The Human Problem

## A Survey of the Conflicting Schools of Thought

WILDER R. REYNOLDS

Basic to any system of theology, psychology, pedagogy, or even practical politics, is a philosophy of the nature of man. "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" Is his origin "in the frog pond" or the Garden of Eden? Is he made a "little lower than the angels," or is he cousin to the brute? Is he a fallen being, or is his "progress onward and upward forever"? Is he depraved and perverted, or is his original nature unaffected? Does he need regeneration or the right kind of education? Are the remedial measures by which he must be helped to be found in theology or sociology? Are his chief hindrances and evils heredity, or are they environmental? Must he have a redeemer to save him out of his sins, or should the emphasis be upon "salvation by character"? In fine, is the Grace of God to be magnified or the Grace of Nature?

These are persistent questions. The religious mind has struggled with them for centuries. There is a tendency in the pragmatic utilitarianism of our day to ignore them, but the fact remains that they must be answered in an implicit or tacit way before one can preach a sermon or engage in religious, social or educational work. It is the purpose of this discussion to trace the development of this problem as it is seen in the history of Christian thought. Much confusion exists today simply because the church at large is not familiar with this general background of thought that was developed in the early centuries, and that has been variously restated in later periods of history. By comparing and contrasting these schools in their basic assumptions, and discovering again what the leaders of thought have had to say on

the subject, the servant of Christ should be more thoroughly furnished unto his task.

### I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The church has always been under the compulsion of necessity to defend its doctrines against those who would pervert them. This has given rise to great controversies, not infrequently to be followed by the formulation of basic creeds succinctly stated. Such was the Arian controversy which culminated in the Nicene Creed of 325 A. D., defining the position of the church on the doctrine of the Trinity. This creed safeguarded the church against the heresies of Monarchianism, Subordinationism, and Arianism; and in 381 A. D., at the Council of Constantinople, another clause was added which effectually curbed the Macedonian heresy relating to the nature of the Holy Spirit.

With the doctrine of the Trinity thus definitively stated, the church was now forced, by the appearance of erroneous teachings, to define its position on the Christological problem. Having asserted the full deity of Christ in the Godhead at Nicea, the question now turned upon the relation of the human and divine natures in Christ. This problem had been recognized by the Fathers from earliest days, but by 362 A. D. the rise of Apollinarianism forced the attention of the church upon the question in a more precise manner. The Chalcedonian Creed of 451 A. D. gave the church's answer to the question concerning the nature of Christ, thereby ruling out the heresies of Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, and Monophysitism.



It was inevitable that the thought of the church must focus upon the most basic problem of all—the nature of man himself. In the ensuing controversy, known in Church History as the Anthropological controversy of the fifth century, the fashion of thought respecting the nature of man was set for all the succeeding centuries. Today all sociologists, psychologists, and theologians base their system upon one or another of the three basic theories developed at this time, unless they accept materialism.

The principal protagonists in the opening phases of the controversy were Augustine and Pelagius, who stood poles apart in their positions. Their spiritual successors were, on the one hand, Calvin in the 16th century and the present day Calvinistic fundamentalists, and, on the other, the Socinians of the 17th century and present day modernism. Between the two were found the Semi-Pelagians of the 5th century, the Arminians of the 17th century and the present day Arminian fundamentalists, sometimes referred to as essentialists.

## II. THE AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL

Augustine stands out as a mountain peak in the closing period of the Graeco-Roman civilization. It is to be doubted whether any other man in the Christian era has done more thinking for the centuries than he. His view of human nature was decidedly pessimistic. The very center of his thought is his doctrine of God, in which the sovereignty of God is over-pressed and the ability of man is minimized to the vanishing point. "Nothing is done unless the Omnipotent wills it to be done, either by permitting it or Himself doing it." He magnified the absolute power of God, denying that His will is ever thwarted, yet he denied that God is the cause of evil or that the sins of men can be traced back to Him.

His followers of the 16th century were not so timid about accepting the logical conclusions of Augustine's philosophy. Calvin elaborated his principles in such state-

ments as these: "God not only foresaw the fall and ruin of man, but He arranged it all by the determination of His own will." "It would have been better if man had been incapable of sinning, but God willed otherwise." Zwingli likewise declared that all deeds of men, wicked as well as good, are done by God, the only real cause in the universe.

The doctrine of sin and grace grow naturally out of these positions. The federal headship of Adam and the solidarity of human nature are maintained. "In Adam, we sinned all." Human nature was on probation in the garden of Eden, but that probation was ended with the fall. Henceforth the will of man is resolutely set against God, and all are immoral. Calvin follows the same reasoning, teaching that man is not born human but devilish. He could, therefore, say that there are infants in hell a span long. Human nature is born sinful, guilty and punishable. The soul of man is morally dead.

The theory of salvation is wholly monergistic, i.e., one way action from God to man. God bestows His grace freely and quite without regard to human want either actual or foreseen. "He goes before the unwilling that he may will; He follows the willing that he may not will in vain." This grace is irresistible. Those whom He wills to save cannot prevent Him even if they wish to do so. "For even with the very wills of men He does what He will, when He will."

That some are saved and others not is wholly due to God's secret will which we are quite unable to fathom. To those whom God predestinates to eternal life He gives the gift of perseverance that they may endure to the end; none of the elect can permanently fall away and be lost.

Many features of Calvinism have been radically changed in more recent times. The following statement of Dryer is significant, "The Calvinism which the Remonstrants (Arminians) rejected is dead in English-speaking lands, while most of the New Calvinists go far beyond the Remonstrants in what they reject of the Geneva Reformer's opinions. The significance of Arminius



is that of Columbus and Luther; he broke the way which the modern world was to follow."<sup>1</sup> This other word is also to the point: "And yet all progress in religious thought or in philanthropic enterprise has been possible only through the overthrow and destruction of the essential elements of Calvin's system."<sup>2</sup>

The modern successors of Augustine and Calvin are the Calvinistic fundamentalists. Many of the harsher features of predestination and the total disability of man are repudiated. They hold the satisfaction theory of atonement, implying limited grace, they teach the fixed number of the elect, the perseverance of the saints, and many hold an elaborate system of Premillennialism which is based upon a very pessimistic view of this world-age. The definition of sin is very broad, including all weakness, infirmity and ignorance. From such a viewpoint, it is little less than sacrilege or profanation to claim to be able to live without sin.

The "higher life" movement in this school is the Keswick movement, otherwise known as the "victorious life" movement. The emphasis is upon the baptism with the Holy Spirit which empowers for service. Since man is sinful in body, soul and spirit, inherently and inescapably so, divine grace effects the suppression rather than the eradication of carnal tendencies. Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer rather than imparted. The tendency is to emphasize the positive aspects of the Spirit-filled life and neglect the negative, while in the corresponding movement in the Arminian school the tendency is oftentimes to stress the negative aspects at the expense of the positive.

### III. THE PELAGIAN SCHOOL

At the opposite pole from Augustine stood Pelagius, a British monk. He was profoundly interested in Christian conduct, and devoted himself to the task of improving moral conditions in the local communi-

ty. The low tone of morals so prevalent were due, according to his viewpoint, not to depravation and moral inability of man, but to lack of a vivid sense of personal responsibility. He felt that the doctrine of moral inability destroyed belief in human freedom without which virtue was impossible. The result was that Christians depended too much upon God and the church, and too little on their own efforts.

The following bit of dialectic serves to make clear his position: "Again it is to be inquired whether a man ought to be sinless. Without doubt he ought. If he ought he can; if he cannot he ought not. And if a man ought not to be sinless then he ought to be sinful, and that will not be sin which it is admitted he ought to do."

Pelagius held the atomic view of human nature. He refused to believe that Adam's sin could have direct effect upon his posterity. He believed that divine justice demands that men be rewarded only for their own independent merits; that all be given equal opportunities, and special favor be shown to none. Thus he maintained that each is the Adam of his own soul. Men are born into the world innocent and free as Adam was before the fall; and each must choose for himself just as Adam did.

The idea of substitutionary atonement must be rejected by those who hold this theory. The position of the modern followers of Pelagius is correctly expressed in this argument which the writer heard from a professor in a great university as he railed at traditional Christianity: "We cannot accept that kind of morality. To assume that one may sidestep a life of evil deeds by simply believing on someone is too simple, too childish and puerile. Everyone must stand on his own merit. If he has merit it must be his own, and if he has demerit he must suffer for it."

Our textbooks reflect this same opinion. The following quotation is rather typical: "The Christian doctrine of forgiveness of sins possesses this evil influence because it disseminates the grossly erroneous no-

<sup>1</sup> Dryer, G. H., *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. III, p. 564.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* Vol. III, p. 341.

<sup>3</sup> McGiffert, *History of Christian Thought*, Vol. 2, p. 128.

tion that repentance absolves a person from responsibility for immorality of his past conduct. It would be difficult to find a more anti-social and immoral religious doctrine."<sup>4</sup>

Pelagianism, with its 17th century counterpart, Socinianism, and its newer representative, Modernism, regards Christianity as a moral system rather than a redemptive agency. There are only two kinds of religion: A religion of redemption and a religion of attainment. Augustinianism and Semi-Pelagianism are redemptive. To Augustine the divine activity is everything, to Pelagius, the human; to the one God was the center of interest, to the other, man. The present modernistic doctrine of "Salvation by character" is decidedly Pelagian.

Pelagius and his followers were condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A. D., and Pelagianism was officially a heresy both in the east and west after that. With the dominance of the evolutionary theory in the thinking of this age there has come a marked revival of this ancient heresy. Sociology, psychology, history and religious education are based entirely upon this theory of human nature. Such time-honored Christian doctrines as the high origin of man, his subsequent fall and depravation, and his absolute need of redemption find no possible place in this theory. It is utterly impossible to build upon a Pelagian psychology and anthropology a system of redemptive theology, although many are apparently trying to do it.

#### IV. THE SEMI-PELGIAN SCHOOL

To Augustine the dominating motive was religious; to Pelagius it was moral; but to Semi-Pelagians the dominating motives were both moral and religious. Their system was frankly synergistic, emphasizing at once the doctrine of divine sovereignty and of human ability. They accepted the doctrine of original sin, and agreed with Augustine that without divine grace men are wholly incapable of good, but they gave men some part in their own salvation instead of ascribing it all to God.

Semi-Pelagianism (which might legitimately be termed Semi-Augustinianism) embraced the following principles: All are sinners because of Adam's sin and no one is saved without being regenerated by divine grace; salvation is offered to all without exception, and every man decides whether he will accept offered grace and be saved or reject it and be lost. God helps the believer, but the act of faith is man's own, not God's. Predestination is based upon God's foreknowledge of one's faith and perseverance. The number of the elect is not fixed. Man's ability to take the first steps towards salvation is emphasized, and the church's responsibility in preaching and the care of souls is stressed.

Semi-Pelagianism represented the common sentiment of the western church before both Augustine and Pelagius, and to it the church reverted in the later Middle Ages. Unfortunately the term Semi-Pelagianism rather than Semi-Augustinianism, which is sometimes applied, was used, for this school has far more in common with Augustinianism than with Pelagianism. Both Semi-Pelagianism and Augustinianism are to be regarded as orthodox positions, while Pelagianism is always heterodox.

The present day successors of the Semi-Pelagians and Arminians may be called Arminian fundamentalists, or Arminian essentialists. The term seems to have come into more or less common use within the last fifteen or twenty years. It seems to be gaining some popular vogue, for a group of educators have recently styled themselves "essentialists." It obviously is intended to indicate a moderately conservative mode of thought, striking the golden mean between the extremes of ultra-conservatism and radicalism.

The essentialists are to be distinguished from the main body of fundamentalists in the unwillingness of many to accept the theory of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the fixed number of the elect, the eternal security of the saints, an extreme form of Premillenarianism which contains many strictly Calvinistic elements, and others.

<sup>4</sup> Parmelee, *Criminology*, p. 109.

The "higher life" movement within the school is popularly known as the "holiness movement." It is based upon John Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification, otherwise known as Christian perfection. It should be noted that Wesley's rather circumscribed definition of sin is necessary, if one is to hold this theory: "Sin is a wilful transgression of a known law of God." It seems that much theological rancor of the past might have been saved, if Calvinists and Arminians had taken the trouble to discover each other's definition of sin. If the Arminian accepts the Calvinistic definition of sin, then, perforce, he must own that he sins every day in word, thought and deed.

This "movement" emphasizes the theory of the elimination of the carnal nature—the cleansing of the heart from sin. Here again it is necessary to note the sharp delimitation of the approved teaching. Speaking in terms of a trichotomy, this carnality which may be eradicated is not a property of the body (soma), or the mind or soul (psyche), but of the spirit (pneuma). It is the *sarx* (flesh in the bad ethical sense) of Scripture, the principal earmarks of which are: "conflict between the flesh and the spirit, ignorance of God, contempt of God, destitution of the fear of God and of trust in Him, hatred of the government of God, terror at the justice of God, anger against God, despair of God's favor, reliance upon things visible".\*

This doctrine of perfection is narrowly defined, and the qualifying adjective Christian is always necessary. It is solely in the realm of the spirit (pneuma) and involves only the impulsive conscience, not the discriminative conscience.<sup>†</sup> Thus perfection may only be predicated of motives, purpose, intention and never of action, performance or conduct. It is summed up in this passage: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with

all thy strength:—and—thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mark 12:30-31.

#### CONCLUSION

The following statement may well be put down as a virtual, self-evident truth: As is one's philosophy of human nature so will his entire scheme of theology be molded and his service and work be determined. He who builds upon the current variety of Pelagianism which dominates the textbooks and the schools—that which underlies our pedagogy and much of the religious education of the day—will largely have his work cut out for him. He will, if he is consistent, substitute Sociology for Theology; education for regeneration; a Kingdom of Man for the Kingdom of God; the Grace of Nature for the Grace of God; and social uplift for salvation by faith. This, in effect, is a religion of attainment taking the place of a religion of redemption.

The present modernistic vogue follows the cues of John Locke, Hume, Voltaire and, particularly, Rousseau. Rousseau is reputed to have had a vision on a hot, dusty road in France which has been compared to the vision of St. Paul on the Damascus road. In a vision or trance there burst upon him this realization: "Man is inherently good, and it is by his institutions that he is made wicked." This removes the problem of evil from the heart of man, where the Bible located it, and identifies it with the institutions of society. The natural corollary follows: Make the environment right and man will be right; if you would save the individual, you must first save the social order.

Irving Babbitt, late of Harvard University, asserts that America is more naïvely Rousseauistic than any other modern nation. He argues that progressivism in education and modernism in Protestantism, both of which are thoroughly permeated with Rousseauistic humanitarianism, are building upon a superficial and erroneous philosophy of human nature. With their emphasis upon self-realization and self-expression, and repudiation of the old

\* Shedd, W. T., *History of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 154.

† Steele, Daniel, *Milestone Papers*, p. 133.

Christian virtues of humility, renunciation and discipline, he fears that the very foundations of our society are imperilled.<sup>7</sup> We are in danger of witnessing here the major cultural tragedy of the ages.

It seems clear that any adequate view of human nature must take into account a sinister, subversive factor. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it" (Jer. 17:9). If the old doctrine of original sin is rejected, something just about like it must be substituted. Even an anti-Christian philosopher like Bertrand Russell admits as much. He frankly says there is universal malice, ill-will and hatred. But he denies that these spring from any corruption of human nature. He rather makes the astounding assertion that this results from bad digestion and inadequate functioning of the ductless glands, caused by oppression and thwarting in our childhood.<sup>8</sup> That is to say, our fathers disciplined us and our digestion and ductless glands were permanently disordered. The converse should therefore be true: Allow a generation to grow up without restraint or thwarting and

we should thereby end malevolence.

It is incumbent upon every Christian to be as realistic as possible in dealing with His world. Before he casts aside the Faith of the Fathers to build his philosophy and theology upon a Pelagian foundation he should ponder well the following statements from the most realistic book in the world and make very sure he can prove them false: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). "This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead" (Eccl. 9:3). "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it" (Jer. 17:9). "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

If these sobering statements be true, then man's greatest need is not social uplift, economic security, or education, but regeneration. A religion of redemption, rather than a religion of attainment, is the only cure for the gravest ills of the world.

<sup>7</sup> *Living Philosophies*, p. 121.

<sup>8</sup> *Living Philosophies*, p. 19.

## THE CONFLICTING SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

### Comparisons and Contrasts

#### FIFTH CENTURY SCHOOLS

Augustinianism

Semi-Pelagianism

Pelagianism

#### 16TH, 17TH CENTURY RESTATEMENTS

Calvinism

Armijnianism

Socinianism

#### PRESENT-DAY SUCCESSORS

Calvinistic Fundamentalism

Arminian Fundamentalism  
(Essentialism)

Modernism

Emphasis upon Divine sovereignty. Human ability denied. Monergistic.

Emphasis upon both Divine sovereignty and human ability. Synergistic.

Human ability magnified. Easily becomes monergistic.

Adam created intelligent and elementarily moral. Had original righteousness in Eden.

Same

Evolutionism. Continuity between physical constitution of man and lower animals.

Solidarity of human nature. Federal headship of Adam.

Solidarity of human nature. Law of genetic transmission.

Atomistic view of human nature. Each is the Adam of his own soul.

Adamic perfection lost in first sin. Nature thus rendered abnormal through privation.

Same

Fall was from unconscious innocence to conscious guilt. This fall from innocence is in a sense a rise to a higher grade of being.

Adam's sin unique. His acquired modification transmitted to descendants.

Same

Negation

Man's soul is morally dead.

Man's soul is morally sick.

Man's soul is morally well.

Probation ended at fall. All human nature set against God.

Probation continued in this age.

Same

Traducian theory of origin of soul maintained.

Traducianism

Creationism

Every man comes into world with corrupt nature—inward disorder and abnormality.

Same

Every man enters world innocent and free as Adam was before the fall.

Original sin is original guilt. It is culpable and punishable.

Original sin is not guilt. It is a malady and not punishable.

Apparent imperfection is only inferior evolutionary development.

Will was free before fall and inclined to righteousness. Freedom to righteousness lost, will enslaved to evil, and can choose only civil righteousness.

Will is depraved, but it is still free to choose righteousness with the aid of cooperating grace.

Will is always free, equally capable of choosing good and evil.

Sin inheres in human nature, hence every man is necessarily a sinner from birth.

Sin is a wilful transgression of a known law of God.

Sin is survival or misuse of habits and tendencies that were incidental to earlier stage of development. Sinfulness lies in their anachronism.

Satisfaction theory of atonement. Limited grace.

Governmental theory of atonement. Universal grace.

Moral influence theory of atonement.

Election is eternal, absolute and unconditional.

Election is conditional. Emphasis upon election to service rather than election to salvation.

Same

Redeeming grace is irresistible in its operation on the elect. Without it man can neither repent nor believe.

Mixture of grace and free will. Two efficient agencies: the will itself and the Holy Spirit.

Grace is the natural endowment of the individual along with will, intellect, etc.

Eternal security of the saints.

There is the possibility of apostatizing.

Same



Remainder of apostate nature still exists in regenerate soul, in continual conflict with new man. The final and crowning act of grace results in entire cleansing of indwelling sin from soul. This grade of grace is never witnessed this side of the grave.

Emphasis upon suppression of carnal nature.

The primary concern of the church is the preaching of theology in order that irresistible grace may effect the regeneration of the elect.

In substantial agreement, save that the Wesleyan school teaches that the entire cleansing of indwelling sin from the soul may be experienced here and now.

Wesleyan school emphasizes eradication of carnal nature.

Theology holds the paramount place in order to effect the regeneration of the individual, yet sociology and the education of the individual are indispensable.

Original creation neither holy nor sinful. Original nature unchanged.

Negation

Sociology is substituted for theology, and education for regeneration.

## The President's Letter

(Continued from Page 1)

dent J. C. McPheeters. The opening convocation of the John Wesley Seminary Foundation marked the passing of still another milepost in the progress of the seminary.

A welcome guest of the seminary in the month of December was Henry Joel Cadbury, Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard University, Chairman of the American Friends' Service Committee, and member of the Board of Translation of the American Standard Version of the New Testament. Dr. Cadbury spoke to the student body on "Problems in Connection with the Translation of the American Standard Version of the New Testament."

Dr. Wilhelm Pauck, Professor of Church History in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, delivered two addresses on the occasion of the Kentucky-Tennessee Area Interseminary Conference at Asbury Seminary, January 8th. This conference brought a splendid group of guests to our campus.

The students of Asbury Theological Seminary and faculty have been active in the matter of collection and forwarding of relief to needy people in Germany. In addition to the amount of well over a thousand dollars for food, (chiefly raised through the cooperation of students, faculty and friends, these being administered through CARE), several hundred pounds of clothing have been sent to needy pastors and theological teachers.

The annual concert tour of the Seminary Glee Club was made at the close of the winter quarter. The club consists of 28 voices under the direction of Professor Rodney Long with Don Martin as the pianist. Pre-tour concerts were given in Glenwood, Indiana, Quincy, Ohio, and the Annual Ministers' Conference at Wilmore. The tour of the club this year was a part of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the seminary. It was one of the most extensive tours that the club has ever made, including the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Illinois, making a total of 12 states including the pre-tour concerts in Indiana and Ohio. Many reports have been received expressing high satisfaction with the program given by the club. There were numerous seekers in the services and quite a number of conversions in connection with the programs. The heart-warming testimony given in connection with each program, will remain as an abiding contribution to the spiritual life of the communities and cities where the club appeared.

The immediate goal in our building program is the completion of the "Aunt Betty" Morrison Memorial Apartment House and the central heating plant. The work is progressing on these buildings with a view to having them completed by the opening of the fall quarter.

The architect's plans have been completed for the Estes Chapel, and the plans have been submitted to contractors for bids. The building committee is highly pleased with the plans. The new chapel will have a seating capacity of 750.

There are seventy members in the graduating class this year. Commencement exercises will be held in the Hughes Auditorium on Sunday evening, May 30th. Bishop Ralph S. Cushman will be the commencement speaker. The seminary also participates in the combined baccalaureate service at Asbury College on Sunday morning, May 30th, when Bishop Charles C. Selecman will deliver the sermon. Alumni Day for the seminary will be held on Monday, May 31st.

## Book Reviews

*Modern Christian Revolutionaries*, edited by Donald Attwater. New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1947. 390 pp. \$4.00.

For some years it has been fashionable to analyze a number of those individuals who have been vocal in their criticism of modern society. Most of these criticisms have been levelled in the name of Christianity, and have sought to show the thinness of the veneer with which our so-called Christian society is covered. Attwater has brought together a series of five 'criticisms of the critics'—summaries by careful students of the writings and pronouncements of the men who have been profound irritants to the complacent in our time.

The five men under study are: Søren Kierkegaard, Eric Gill, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, Charles Freer Andrews, and Nicholas Berdyaev. As the editor points out in his Introduction, "This is a very mixed bag. Nobody could agree completely with the distinguishing ideas of all of them none could share all their views and enthusiasms: but everybody can learn, and learn much, from each of them." (ix).

The selection of Kierkegaard for first place among the entries is understandable. The analysis of his life, presented by M. S. Channing-Pearce, contains most of the conventional biographical material concerning this interesting Dane, plus a well-chosen survey of those of his works which bear his criticisms of the superficial Christianity of his day, notably his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, his *Training in Christianity* by *Anti-Climacus*, and his *Stages*. This section affords a splendid survey of the theological objections which S. K. brought forward against his time. One could wish for an additional analysis of his philosophical insights, especially as contained in his *Either/Or*. Admirable is Channing-Pearce's

avoidance of the childish tendency to magnify Kierkegaard's importance to the point where he who does not devote large time to his thought is dubbed a theological and philosophical boor!

The editor himself provides the survey of the thought of Eric Gill, the son of an English sectarian minister. Gill, a convert to Roman Catholicism, stands as the critic of a dehumanized society, of socialist utopianism, and of current religious architecture. The genius of the man lay in his many-sidedness; his sensitiveness to social abuses, his ability as a moralist, his devoutness as a Catholic, his independence as a writer, and his skill as an artist and architect. He was an apologist for the sanctity of the individual, in a society of power-dislocations. His was a voice of justifiable alarm: we are not yet able to assess the soundness of his diagnosis of our cultural ills, or to deny that the trend of our day is in the direction of a form of society in which "man's intelligence will wither away in highbrow snobbery or mob vulgarity." (p. 228)

The surveys of Chesterton and Andrews deal with men who are in some respects opposites: The first is generally well-known, chiefly through his journalism, while the second exerted the force of his protest in British colonial affairs. Chesterton worked chiefly through his pen, Andrews chiefly through his personal contacts. Both surveys have their value; this reviewer feels that that of Andrews is the better written of the two. The former wrestled with the difficult relationship between freedom and the socio-political order, and found the answer in Socialism. The latter wrestled with the relationships posed by the Indian nation, and sought to effect a settlement upon a basis remarkably like that suggested by St. Francis of Assisi.

Evgueny Lampert's analysis of the life

and thought of Berdyaev serves to acquaint the reader with this man, little known to most of us because of the linguistic barrier and the style of his writings. This discussion is informing to those who would understand the background for the upheaval in Russia—notably its background in Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. The discussion deals largely with the philosophical wrestlings of Berdyaev, particularly as they relate to his proposed social order known as *personalistic Socialism*. His criticisms of the current Soviet regime, and his hope for the future, are well worth at least the time which reading this survey requires.

One would not want a steady diet of the type of material found in *Modern Christian Revolutionaries*. At the same time, realism demands that the Christian, and particularly the Christian minister, come to grips with the problems to which these men call attention. For a compact survey of such question, Attwater's volume is to be recommended.

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Professor of Philosophy of Religion,  
Asbury Theological Seminary.

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*Psychology for Pastor and People*, by John Sutherland Bonnell. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. 225 pp. \$2.50.

The upsurge of interest in counseling as part of the work of the alert pastor has produced a large number of volumes in the past decade, some highly valuable, some of less worth. A number of them have embodied valuable insights, but have included points of view, and deductions based upon them, which made them offensive to ministers of evangelical convictions. Here is a volume which avoids this latter tendency, and which puts into reasonable compass the more sober and tried insights of religious psychiatry.

The author is pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York; this volume is by no means an amateur's attempt, for he published his volume *Pastoral Psychiatry* some years ago. Out of this

experience, he presents a volume which is appreciative of the contribution which psychiatry can make to the genuinely Christian counselor, and which avoids the oversimplification of the problem which has been the bane of conservative writers in this field.

Bonnell uses case histories without the monotony which so frequently marks such usage. His illustrations avoid wordiness, and indicate a critical selection from a very wide experience. The author is aware that there are some cases which are beyond the reach of ordinary non-technical help, and recognizes that some pathological cases ought to be turned over to professional treatment. At the same time, much more emphasis is laid upon the therapeutic power of prayer and of the Word of God than is usual in a book of this type.

This work combines with rather unusual skill the practical and the theoretical in pastoral counseling. It seeks to remove this art from the mysterious realm of esoteric terms, and to place the emphasis upon a practical diagnosis of spiritual problems. The objective seems to be the person-to-person approach, with the objective of directing the advisee as quickly as possible to the Divine Source of help. In accomplishing this purpose, Bonnell exemplifies in his book that which he advocates as central in the counselor, namely the warm and sympathetic personal attitude.

Possibly the most significant feature of the entire volume is the series of "Principles of Counseling" listed in Chapter X. Here are set forth, in brief paragraph form, forty-four summaries of the basic factors in the work of the spiritual counselor. This list covers the range of such work, and outlines the procedures, the objectives, the limitations, the difficulties, and the perils of this form of ministry. This list bears the unmistakable marks of a maturity of outlook which inspires confidence in the writer.

The last of these enumerated principles gives the keynote of the volume: "The pastor-counselor will remember that above all else he is a Christian minister. His chief reliance, therefore, is not on the prin-

ciples of psychology and psychiatry but on the spiritual power released through faith in God." (p. 189) This outlook is applied consistently throughout the work, giving shape and depth to the exposition of a subject which may be of untold value to the pastor facing the complex world of our day.

*Psychology for Pastor and People* is valuable, either taken by itself or as a guidebook for use in connection with more detailed volumes, such as those by Holman, May, and Stoltz. The appended Bibliography gives a rather thorough canvass of current literature in the field, arranged by topics. The Pulpit Book Club is to be commended for the choice of this volume as its February Selection.

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*Best Sermons, 1947-48*, edited by G. Paul Butler. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947. 318 pp. \$2.50.

For insight into the content and style of contemporary preaching this last edition of "Best Sermons" is no doubt as enlightening a volume as can be found. The fifty-two sermons in the book are recognized by the editor and his advisory committees as the most outstanding examples of religious exposition and interpretation found among 6,447 messages recently preached in fifty-three different countries and representing 198 different denominations. Among the contributors are such names as Brunner, Buttrick, John Baillie, Barth, Niemoeller, Fosdick, Weigle, Cardinal Spellman, and Rabbi Cohon. Although most of the sermons are from the pen of widely-known men, a few come from lesser pulpit luminaries.

The messages are in general timely, thought-provoking, and spiritually challenging. Preachers will find them a wealth of homiletical ideas. Although many faiths are represented, the central ideas of the sermons will probably be palatable to all, for no sermon thought to be critical of any

other religion by word or inference is included.

The tenor of the book suggests that the shallow inspirational variety of preaching one has met with all too frequently is on the decline, that the pulpit is acquiring an awareness of the spiritual poverty of man that is long overdue. The plight of the masses following two wars seems to be generating a spirit of high seriousness among our ministers. Grateful as we are for this development, it is unfortunate that the force of these sermons is spent in the main on an effort to bring about a new social order. It seems to some of us that the much-longed-for social change can take place only when an aroused and energetic ministry subordinates man's relationship to man to his relationship to God. These sermons continue to emphasize Christian doing at the expense of Christian being. One looks rather wistfully through these fine sermons for an adequate presentation of the message of a God who can lift men out of their sinful ways.

Generally speaking, the homiletical and literary style of the sermons is what one would expect in a book of this kind. Not a few of the discourses, however, are in default here, a condition which makes one wonder just what constitutes a "best" sermon in the eyes of the editors. At any rate, with no generally-accepted criteria of homiletical excellence, how is one to know precisely what sermons are "best"? The use of the superlative is an unfortunate one. The fact that so large a percentage of the contributors are men who hold key positions in the church at home and abroad makes one wonder what part prestige played in the compilation of the volume.

The value of the collection is enhanced by grouping the sermons according to subject matter, by including brief sketches of the preachers' lives, and by adding a topical index of ideas and illustrations. This reviewer used with profit the 1946 edition of "Best Sermons" in his recent course in contemporary preaching.

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*God Confronts Man in History*, by Henry Sloane Coffin. New York: Scribners, 1947. 154 pp. \$2.50.

The author was called upon to make a world tour, delivering lectures upon the Christian faith under the auspices of the Cook Lectureship. He lectured in the Philippines, China, Thailand, India and Egypt. His first chapter is devoted to the events of the tour and conditions which he found. His impressions are tersely stated: "The impression of the world's plight is disheartening. But the impression of the Christian church fills one with confidence." The other chapters give the lectures which he delivered to the large audiences in the various countries.

#### GOD IN HISTORY

Men have an acute sense of living in history. There is a longing for some unifying force which can control the factors of history. The Christian faith is such a force. The Christian view is that despite the sinister appearances, the world never slips entirely out of God's hands. He is always coming into the world. "History is a series of God's arrivals." God is made known in the mighty acts of history. The most luminous act in history is the Self-disclosure in Jesus.

#### GOD'S SELF DISCLOSURE

God's Self-revelation is complete in Jesus. Yet God has not ceased working and speaking in subsequent centuries. His continuing presence in the church keeps her alive and adaptable, and the Spirit applies the mind of Christ to current situations. God's Self-revelation is both complete and continuing, and yet it will not be fully complete until history has reached its close.

#### GOD'S REDEPTIVE WORK

God's redemption is both an act and a process. One becomes a Christian instantaneously, but it takes a long time to christianize the Christian. The christianization of society presents even more difficulties. It is objected that Christianity furnishes an ideal for the individual, but no corresponding ideal for the nation or the econom-

ic order or the fellowship of races. It furnishes no code of ethics or system of doctrines. But if such ideas had been given for first century conditions it would not have fitted ours. "Christ gave not a rigid law, but a living Spirit." In this way He can be Lord of all nations and races in every age.

#### THE CHURCH

God works through the church for the redemption of individuals and society. Despite much in the church that members may have occasion to deplore, the fact remains that it is spreading faster today than ever before. War proved the indestructibility of the church. Other institutions, the press, schools, universities, labor unions, organizations of business and finance, went down under pressure, but the church was not subdued. The church's main duty is not social reconciliation, but reconciling the world to God. Her most potent and precious gifts come from on high. The church must in this hour look for further comings of God himself, bringing fresh supplies of His grace.

#### THE GOAL OF HISTORY

The goal of history lies beyond history. Earthly existence is a schooling for that commonwealth which lies beyond history. So the Kingdom of God is both present and future. The Kingdom keeps arriving throughout history, always upsetting, and running counter to natural inclinations. It arrives as a protest as well as a purpose to bring the world into accord with God's will. While history moves from one age to another, Jesus Christ remains surely at the center of our expectations. "He is engaged in all that is being prepared in the occurrences of history and in the achievements of faithful men, which will remain in and mould the eternal commonwealth."

The book is evangelical in tone, and breathes the optimism of a Christian philosophy of history. It is good tonic for jaded spirits and faltering faith confronting a world in confusion.

WILDER R. REYNOLDS,  
Professor of Church History,  
Asbury Theological Seminary.

*Religion in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Vergilius Ferm. New York: The Philosophical Library, Inc., 1948. 470 pp. \$5.00.

The past five years or so have witnessed the appearance of a large number of anthologies, covering nearly the whole field of human knowledge, and including many studies in religion. The Philosophical Library has participated in this practice, having issued a number of "Twentieth Century" volumes. Some of these have shared the lack of coherence which is the weakness of anthologies. This is not the case with their newest volume, *Religion in the Twentieth Century*, which includes, in addition to a sizable and well-written Preface by the editor, twenty-seven studies. Each contributing writer was provided in advance with a general prospectus for his guidance. This device has produced a composite work of unusual quality and a fine degree of orderliness.

It goes without saying that an enumeration of religious movements will read differently from a roster of the religions of the world. In this volume, the former grouping is employed. This does not mean that the author has made denominations or sects the basis for inclusion in the work. Rather, he has sought to discover in the religious life of our century the subdivisions of the several living religions which are needed to provide a comprehensive view of each. For example, he includes as representative of Judaism its three chief divisions, Orthodox, Reformed, and Reconstructionist, and as typical of Protestantism, Liberal and Conservative.

In addition to representative divisions, Ferm includes sections on the branches of Christianity which are marked by especial features, such as claims to special revelation, or unusual types of activity which have rendered them centres of enthusiastic adherence. Arrangement is in order of chronological appearance. This places Hinduism at the opening of the volume. Sikhism half-way down the list, and the Ramakrishna Reform within Hinduism in twenty-fifth place.

The editor has added to the value of the book by his page-length biographical notes concerning each writer, placed at the beginning of the chapter, and a selected bibliography at the end of each chapter.

A survey of the articles would be out of place in such a review as this. By way of general observation, let it be said that the purpose of the editor has been to select representative (and usually outstanding) men from the several movements to write the contributions. In the case of chapters on Taoism and Shinto, this has not been possible. The analysts of these have been selected from among scholars whose labors have been with adherents of these faiths. All of this adds up to an able and informative volume.

With respect to Dr. Ferm's Preface, it is noteworthy that he not only indicates the plan and purpose of the work, but also raises the chief problems with which the respective writers must deal. It is a bit surprising to find him making so much of the well-worn motif of *horizontal/vertical*, or the now jaded antithesis between *prophetic* and *priestly* in religion. Many readers will likewise remain unimpressed by his side-tracking of the question "whether one religion is as good as another" by his observation that every religion is plural in itself, and hence that every religious configuration in history must be judged in the light of "whether the vision of the founders and their prophets through the centuries matches those universal ideals which the spirit of God, we must believe, has been proclaiming in the hearts of men of good will everywhere." (p. xiii) Nor will all be persuaded that Ferm is correct in identifying the *prophetic* and the *horizontal* expressions of religion.

With respect to the evaluation of conservatism (especially in Christianity), most of our readers will probably be more inclined to follow Andrew Kerr Rule in his Chapter "Conservative Protestantism" than Vergilius Ferm in his "Preface."

To the reader who can make up his own mind concerning the uniqueness of Christianity, the volume will prove invaluable as a handbook for the study of living religious

systems. Members of the Salvation Army and of Jehovah's Witnesses will be pleased to discover that their movements are of sufficient significance to merit a place in this small encyclopedia. Members of the Society of Friends will be interested in the impartiality with which Howard Haines Brinton describes the "varieties of religious experience" within their fold. Adherents of the major denominations will find incentives to many profitable hours of reading in order to find themselves discussed in this anthology.

HAROLD B. KUHN,  
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*Pillars of Faith*, by Nels F. S. Ferre. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. 125 pp. \$1.50.

Written by the Abbott Professor of Christian Theology at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, this volume has as its purpose "the straightforward and solid exposition of the heart of the Christian faith." (p. 9) While *Pillars of Faith* was first written for a lecture series at Texas Christian University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, it is now offered to the larger public—perhaps for laymen especially—as a statement "in the simplest of terms" of the five central pillars upon which the author believes the Christian faith rests today.

It is Dr. Ferre's conviction that the various authorities which have been successively held through the history of the Christian Church are pillars upon which Christian faith must rest if it is to be stable and strong. According to his view the disciples followed Jesus as their authority during his earthly life, but after he was removed from them the Holy Spirit came to be their counselor and therefore their authority. But the growing need for organization within the body of believers soon led to the "centralizing authority of the Church." Due to abuses of the latter authority, the Protestant Reformation gave rise to another

authority, namely the Bible which became the standard of faith for the Protestant world. But for more than a century a fifth authority has had priority for many within Christendom, namely Reason and Christian experience.

To be sure the author recognizes these five stages—Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Bible, and Reason and Christian Experience—as a rough characterization of the movement within Christendom, but nevertheless insists that these five authorities have had their successive dominance in history, and must be regarded as the pillars of the Christian faith. "God has never let truth rest on one pillar in history. We have at least five pillars of faith. Yet the foundation itself is always God Himself present within our hearts." (p. 92)

Although Dr. Ferre is the son of a Baptist minister, he sounds a traditionally Methodist note in his treatment of Christian experience. After describing the carnal traits of believers' hearts, he goes on to stress the necessity of "a higher grade of experience" which is to be found in the fulness of the Holy Spirit who produces holiness and perfection within the Christian's life. Too seldom do the trumpets of even the front-line theologians sound the call to holiness and Christian perfection. Dr. Ferre's words at this point are timely and commendable.

Other healthy emphases of the book include the central place of faith and worship in the Christian's life. But the shortcomings of this work which claims to be "the straight-forward and solid exposition of the heart of the Christian faith" must also be considered.

Basic to all other objections, the conservative reader will be mentally distressed by the chapter entitled "Biblical Bedrock." While affirming the Bible to be "the Standard or Faith," which exhibits "the conclusive light of God to men" (pp. 82, 83), Dr. Ferre goes on to write this: "God wants to write new and ever better scriptures, both in life and in books. The Holy Spirit is no ancestor worshiper. God never closed the canon of Scripture. Fearful

men who no longer dared to live in the Spirit froze the records of the past. Thereby we received a steady standard which we needed. Yet even now the Holy Spirit wants to write Gospels . . . Even now there can be letters written to the churches which speak with authority . . ." (p. 96) It is impossible for this reviewer to harmonize the authors claim that the Bible is "the Standard for Faith" which we need, with the insistence that the Holy Spirit wants to write even better scriptures today. If this "steady standard" is the result of the fear of men, then we ought to turn to the Spirit for new and better scriptures. But if we do that, it would be wholly out of place to say, as Dr. Ferr does, that "the Bible exhibits the conclusive light of God to men. Its standard truth has been given once for all." (p. 83) Only a fraction of the Church will accept this professor's view as *the heart* of the Christian faith concerning the Scriptures. Relativism and dynamism seem to underlie the author's whole approach to Christianity.

After reading the book many might still desire to ask the author for a clear answer to such questions as these: Are you a trinitarian or a sabellian? Are you a universalist, or do you believe some men will be lost forever? Does God in wrath punish men, or are men's sufferings merely the outworking of sin's consequences? Were Christ's suffering in death expiatory or exemplary? Is the Church the resurrection body of Christ or was his physical body literally raised from the tomb on that first Easter morning? What is the relation between the historical Jesus and the God-head? Is the Christian faith so vague that the differing doctrines held by liberalism, neo-orthodoxy and orthodoxy are mere approximations of it and therefore equal room must be made for all brands within the Church? In deciding matters of belief and practice, who is to determine *how much weight* is to rest upon each of the five pillars of authority? How certain can we be, and upon what basis, that the Church will Christianize—"leaven"—the whole social order and realize on earth the will of God? These and other issues, although raised,

are not satisfactorily handled in the *Pillars of Faith*.

The book is worthy of a thoughtful reading, but if today "God wants to write new and ever better scriptures . . . in books," this book is not one of them.

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*Miracles: A Preliminary Study*, by C. S. Lewis. New York: Macmillan, 1947. 220 pp. \$2.50.

The intriguing Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, has done it again! Already the author of some fifteen volumes, he employs his genial gift for writing in an analysis of naturalism which ends as an apologetic for the fitness of the central miracles of the Christian Faith. The argument is basically metaphysical in character; Lewis possesses a rare gift for making metaphysics palatable.

Two or three themes recur throughout the volume. First: that naturalism is "in the air" these days; second, that there is a basic self-contradiction in the logic of naturalism; and third, that the objectors to Christian supernaturalism act very largely upon the suppressed assumption that miracles are impossible or at least improbable. These are applied in such a manner as to keep the Modern Reader aware that he has naturalism in his blood, and that the emergent 'deity' of the Naturalist accords with his habitual mode of thought.

The vulnerable points in the creed of the naturalist appear to Lewis to be: its reliance upon human reason in spite of an "Everythingism" which logically invalidates reason; its passionate devotion to moral values, while seeking to account for them upon irrational and non-moral grounds; its unwarranted extension (especially backwards) of the validity of the empirical method; and its inability to see that experience cannot prove, in the absolute sense, uniformity. The first half of the work is devoted to the examination of these questions. In the course of this discussion,



Lewis aptly punctures some of the naturalists' arguments for the certainty of their own conclusions; he observes that naïvete is no less common with them than with supernaturalists.

It is obvious that no convincing apologetic could have for its basic argument merely a demonstration that miracles are not inherently impossible. One feels that the work moves into the positive phase with chapter XII, entitled "The Propriety of Miracles." Lewis classifies miracles into three groupings: first, those which center in the Incarnation; second, those having to do with the 'old creation'—that is, miracles which involve the intervention of God in processes usually called 'natural'; and third, the miracles having to do with the New Man and those whom He will bring with Him into glory. His treatment of these respective themes provides the thoughtful Christian with materials by the aid of which he may if he will criticize his naturalism.

One of the outstanding features of the discussion is Lewis' frank recognition of popular misconceptions, and his own personal earlier difficulties with them. The secret of the author's skill in treating the entire subject grows out of his acknowledged spiritual and intellectual pilgrimage, from the level at which he finds his 'Modern Reader' to the place of faith. Nor is he patronizing in his dealing with the common man; Lewis is nearly always ready to step to his side in defense against the scorn of the intellectuals.

It would be unhealthy if such a book as this were so written that no one could or would disagree with any of its parts. At the same time, Evangelicals can read this volume and take heart, that their essential presuppositions are after all capable of scholarly defense. At long last, there comes from one in high place a forthright declaration that the objections of the naturalists to the supposed naïvete of Christians:—as for example, the declaration that Christian Redemption implies an egotism on man's part of man which is inconsistent with newer science, or the cavil based upon the ascension of Christ upward—that these

are cut out of whole philosophical cloth.

Perhaps the reader of this review will have acquired a curiosity to see for himself how such an apologetic can be conducted. He will not be disappointed by the book.

HAROLD B. KUHN,  
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Asbury Theological Seminary.

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*The Questing Spirit—Religion in the Literature of Our Time* selected and edited by Halford E. Luccock and Frances Brentano. New York: Coward-de Cann, Inc., 1947. 717 pp. \$5.00.

The past decade has witnessed a significant change in the attitude of many thinking men and women toward spiritual values. There is mounting evidence that men are becoming hungry for affirmations. Feeling our civilization to be doomed by its own cleverness men are turning, almost despairingly one feels, to re-examine not only the nature of man himself but the foundations on which faith rests. "The Questing Spirit" is abundant testimony to modern man's groping after religious certitude. It has garnered much of the best product of the twentieth century's creative effort to rediscover imperishable values. From a host of American and British writers in all walks of life, the editors have brought together into a 700-page volume such a variety of religious expressions as would indicate that religion is become a major concern of our time. The evidences of soul-quickening are here presented in the form of short stories (29), drama selections (14), poems (250), and prose affirmations (150). Although the book is neither inspirational nor devotional in its aim, it of course does contain many selections that will strengthen and inspire. Our sincere thanks is due to the editors, who have placed at our disposal an anthology which should prove valuable in helping us to understand the spiritual needs of our time.

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*The Light of Faith*, by Albert W. Palmer.  
New York: Macmillan, 1947. 156 pp.  
\$2.00.

This book is written for laymen and as such it makes easy and interesting reading. It is free from the usual maze of theological terms and is contemporary in its outlook. From the Evangelical viewpoint, however, the book is a mixture of wheat and tares.

Most of us would readily concur with the author in his plea for a fresh presentation of "the truths so surely believed among us." He feels that revival is hindered because the Church is 'bogged' with an easy going secularism and a retreat toward theological language and he asks for the presentation of the eternal truth in language readily understood by the lay mind. He follows out this line of thought in his chapters on "The God of Tomorrow" and "What Is Human Personality." We need a revival of a real understanding of the truths concerning God and man. Following this he deals with 'the religion of Jesus'. He bases this on the teachings given in the Lord's prayer. The author is most explicit here on the standards of a practical Christianity showing that Jesus lived, leaving us an example.

In dealing with the life of Jesus the author is confronted with His miracles, Incarnation and Resurrection, and it is here that we as Evangelicals must strongly disagree with his conclusions. He classifies the miracles into three groups:—a) miracles of healing, which, he says, are being repeated today in the hands of medical science; b) miracles of misunderstanding, among which he places the feeding of the five thousand and the changing of water into wine: he feels these never really occurred as miracles but were only the figments of the imagination of a miracle-loving age; c) miracles of legendary misinterpretation due to the credulous unscientific character of first century thought. In this last group are included the stilling of the storm and walking on the sea; these the author believes to have been purely natural phenomena imagined much later to

be miracle. The Incarnation is dealt with very scantily and the author believes it to be a later edition to defend the humanity and deity of Christ. The Resurrection, in his view, is purely a 'spiritual' manifestation and not the historical event which is recorded in the Gospels. Again these records are believed to have been built upon legends rather than eye-witness truth. In the light of these facts, of course, the author challenges any idea of verbal inerrancy of the Scriptures and believes that God's revelation is not so much in the written Word but in the events it records.

However, while we may disagree with some of the paths which the author traverses, we cannot but wholeheartedly affirm his point of conclusion. He paints a true picture of our contemporary world under the name of "Modern Paganism." He describes it as ignoring God, ignoring Jesus and having no sense of sin. He gives many valid arguments as to how and why we have arrived in this condition and then leads to the remedy in his chapter on "Religion in the Personal Life." In uncompromising terms he defines the moral and ethical requirements of a Christian and then shows how they are to be obtained. His emphasis on a 'Personal encounter' with God is a wholesome one although he seems to overlook the necessity of Christ as mediator and atonement for sin.

A very practical chapter follows on the effect of religion on our view of death and immortality. Death becomes a gateway to the glorious beyond and the funeral service is "suffused with the holy light of faith." He closes the book with a series of testimonies under the title of "Some Modern Confessions of Faith." It is interesting to note such notable names as Tolstoy, Lowell, and Professor Knudson numbered among these witnesses.

In all, the book is an interesting summary of the thought of a man who has had wide experience among young people as President of Chicago Theological Seminary and also as a Congregational Pastor.

DAVID RIGBY, M. D.,  
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*Study in Jeremiah*, by Howard B. Rand.  
Haverhill, Mass: Destiny Publishers,  
1947. 320 pp. \$3.50.

The author of this volume is convinced but not convincing. This "study" of Jeremiah is a thesis designed to show that Jeremiah was instrumental in transferring the throne of David to the British Isles. All exposition of the prophet of Judah's captivity is treated with this apologetic interest in view.

The method of treatment is a semi-popular exposition of the book of Jeremiah arranged in chapters and topics following the sequence of the text. It is largely narrative rather than analytical in presentation. Few Biblical "authorities" are cited, documentation is lacking, and most citations are the Biblical text itself. Most citations are given from publications of Destiny Publishers. The style is very readable, the format attractive, the workmanship is careful.

The volume is really an extended sermon on the text "... to plant and to build" (Jer. 1:10). The argument is that only skepticism prevents Bible students from seeing that since the negative part of Jeremiah's commission was literally fulfilled, there must be a literal fulfillment of the positive part. This plausible position is followed by an attempt to prove by history that Jeremiah did "plant and build" by conveying two daughters of King Zedekiah to Ireland where one wed a king. Thus the Anglo-Saxon peoples are survivors of the "lost" tribes of Israel, the British kings are the sons of David whose throne is to abide forever. Obviously, those who say that the promise of the perpetuity of the Davidic line was fulfilled in Jesus Christ have missed the point according to this view.

The book is dominated by the eschatological motif. The author points out that while Israel was divorced, and while Judah rejected Jesus the Messiah, Benjamin did accept and became "fishers" for the other ten tribes. As a result the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples ("I-Sac-Sons, or Saxons") are "the House of Israel today" (p. 86).

The "calling of the Gentiles", represented by the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the earth, thus occupies a rôle almost secondary in the divine economy. Jeremiah's prophecy of the destruction of Babylon was completely fulfilled only with the destruction of Nazi Germany when the "times of the Gentiles" was ended. The next great event will be the battle of Armageddon caused by Soviet Russia's opposition to the House of Israel (pp. 263f.). The fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy of the New Covenant in the New Testament Church, which is so prominent in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is almost eclipsed by this longer eschatological motif (p. 186).

The author is critical of both liberals who doubt God's Word and the fundamentalists who spiritualize it. He exhibits a fundamental distrust of "scholars", often with considerable justification. Amazingly enough, however, in his claim to accuracy of interpretation, and in spite of the alleged "volumes" of evidence, he has not cited a single recognized authority in defense of his central thesis. All documentation of debatable points, so far as this reviewer was able to discover, is limited to partisans of his cause. Until he can manifest more scholarly habits himself the author can ill afford to scoff at the "scholars". The book may be read with both interest and profit. The reader will profit much, with reference to Biblical exegesis, by observing how it ought *not* to be done. No one can justly deny the claim of the publishers that this study "reads like a novel."

GEORGE ALLEN TURNER,  
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*The Witness of the Prophets*, by Gordon Pratt Baker. Abingdon - Cokesbury Press, 1948. 213 pp. \$2.25.

This is a good book. Its goodness consists of several factors, chiefly its spiritual insight, historical imagination, felicity of expression, and creative syntheses. The author is a graduate of DePauw and Drew

and pastor of the Methodist Church in Washington Grove, Maryland. The book is not a series of sermons but rather a series of biographical essays. They are characterized by a certain maturity of thought, and an awareness of the groundwork in both Scripture and history, without being pedantic. The chapter titles reflect the freshness and originality of treatment which characterizes the book:

Amos, the moralist; Hosea, the evangelist; Isaiah, the statesman; Habakkuk, the father of speculation; Jeremiah, the poet; Haggai, the realist; Zechariah, the Idealist; Jesus, the Heir of the prophets, the Prince of the prophets, and the Hope of the prophets.

The author's treatment of the prophets is very appreciative. His purpose is to discover their enduring contribution and hence their relevance for our time. The appearance of the book thus provides another evidence of the increased appreciation which modern Protestantism has for the Hebrew prophets. This author is not only concerned with the social message of the prophets, but seems especially concerned to set forth their religious contribution. Distinctive also is the successful attempt to show how Jesus' message and mission is the culmination of their messages.

The style of the book is one of its strong assets. The vivid descriptions bespeak the feelings as well as the thought of one who is able both to project himself into a historical situation and take his readers with him. Always, however, the author's creative imagination is subordinate to the desire to reconstruct truthfully the situation in which the timeless messages were born. He is skilful in showing the connection between the message itself and the cultural matrix in which it was formed.

With insight and with a freshness of expression if not originality of conception this author shows how Jesus extended, integrated, and applied the insights of Amos, Hosea, Habakkuk and others. To Amos' declaration that God will judge man,

Jesus added that man is really his own judge, hence the Pharisees would not tolerate Him. The cross of Jesus, says the author, represents both the reality of man's sin and God's righteousness. "The cross resolutely testifies to the fact that there is no reality more unspeakably terrifying than the reality of hell. . . . Certainly no one can expect God to preserve that soul against its will and in defiance of all the spiritual laws of salvation" (pp. 201ff).

The writer's familiarity with literature adds much to the effectiveness of his presentation. Spiritual truths seen in the Bible are often well illustrated by an appropriate quotation from the poets.

The defects of the book are not serious in view of the author's purpose. This reviewer wishes that there had been a more studious attempt to seize upon the most important truths of the prophetic books. The treatment is too fragmentary. If the picture is to be reconstructed why not include all the *essential* points? Why not give more attention to Amos' reply to the ultimatum of Amaziah? Why the slight attention to Habakkuk's message on living by faith and his determination to rejoice in the Lord regardless of outward conditions? One gets the impression that the author's acquaintance with the prophetic books is too largely mediated through secondary sources. An uncritical acceptance of the interpretations of the "higher critics" is discernible, especially in the religious and literary history of the Old Testament. His Christology is not too distinct, the stress being almost entirely upon Jesus' humanity. Has a "Christian humanism" transformed the interpreter of the prophets into an essayist rather than a reformer? Is insight more important than faith? But, it is a good book; its worth consisting in its penetration, its freshness of presentation, and its readability.

GEORGE ALLEN TURNER,  
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